

SELECT WORKS,

IN

VERSE AND PROSE,

OF

MR. A. COWLEY.

VOL. I.

SELECT WORKS

IN

VERSE AND PROSE

M. R. A. COLLEY.



VOL. I.

239 i 18

SELECT WORKS
OF MR. A. COWLEY;
IN TWO VOLUMES:

With a PREFACE and NOTES by the Editor.

VOLUME THE FIRST.



Drawn & engraved by John Hall, from an Original Portrait painted by Limonin Chameau in the Collection of the Hon.^{ble} Horace Walpole.

"Forgot his Epic, nay Pindaric art;

"But still we love the language of his heart." POPE.

L O N D O N,

PRINTED BY W. BOWYER AND J. NICHOLS:

FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND.

MDCCLXXII.

With a Preface and Notes by the Editor.



FOR T. C. ABELL, IN THE STRAND.
PRINTED BY W. ROWLAND AND J. NICHOLS:
MDCCLXXII.

P R E F A C E.

IT would be using most writers of name very ill, to treat them with that freedom, which I have presumed to take with Mr. Cowley. But every thing, he wrote, is either so good or so bad, that, in all reason, a separation should be made; lest the latter, which, unhappily, is the greater part, should,

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in the end, stifle and overlay the former.

P R E F A C E.
THE reason of this striking difference in the compositions of the same man, whose genius and learning are unquestionable, is, That he generally followed the taste of his time, which was the worst imaginable; and rarely his own, which was naturally excellent: as may be seen in the few pieces of his poetry, here selected from the rest; and, especially, in his prose works, which (except

the

the notes on his *Pindaric Odes*,
and *Davidicis*) are given entire,
and have no common merit.

BUT the talents, by which he is
distinguished, as a polite writer,
are the least of his praise. There
is something in him, which pleases
above his wit, and in spite of it.
It is that moral air, and tender
sensitivity of mind, which every
one perceives and loves in read-
ing Mr. Cowley. And this cha-
racter of his genius, though it be
a 4 expressed,

viii P R E F A C E.

expressed, indeed, in his other writings, comes out especially, and takes our attention most, in some of his *smaller poems and essays*; which, therefore, it seemed to be for the author's credit, and the convenience of his readers, to draw near to each other, and place, together, in one view. I have said — *for the convenience of his readers*: for, though all are capable of being entertained, perhaps instructed, by the image of a good mind, when set before them, yet few will be at the pains to seek that instruction

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instruction or entertainment for themselves, through the scattered works of so unequal and voluminous a writer.

To do justice to the memory of Mr. Cowley, in these two respects, I mean, in his capacity both of a polite and moral writer, is the sole end of this publication. Every man of taste and virtue will read it with pleasure. There are, indeed, many lines dispersed through his other poems, which deserve praise. But, on the whole, it is
enough

x P R E F A C E

enough if this small collection go
down to posterity : In that case,
neither they, nor the author,
will have any great loss, though
the rest be forgotten.

Lincoln's-Inn,

April 21, 1792.

R. Hurd.

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Proposition for the Advancement
of Experimental Philosophy.
215—240



THE FIRST
AN
ACCOUNT
OF THE
LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF

MR. ABRAHAM COWLEY.

Written to MR. CLIFFORD.

Prefixed to the Folio Edition of 1668.

SIR,

MR. COWLEY in his will recommended to my care the revising of all his works that were formerly printed, and the collecting of those papers which he had designed for the press. And he did it with this particular obligation, *That I*

VOL. I. B *should*

should be sure to let nothing pass, that might seem the least offence to religion or good manners. A caution, which you will judge to have been altogether needless. For certainly, in all ancient or modern times, there can scarce any author be found, that has handled so many different matters in such various sorts of style, who less wants the correction of his friends, or has less reason to fear the severity of strangers.

ACCORDING to his desire and his own intention, I have now set forth his Latin and English writings, each in a volume apart; and to that which was before extant in both languages, I have added all that I could find in his closet, which he had brought to any manner of perfection. I have thus, Sir, performed the will of the dead. But I doubt I shall not satisfy the expectation of the living, unless some account be here premised concerning this excellent man. I know very well, that he has given the world

world the best image of his own mind in these immortal monuments of his Wit, Yet there is still room enough left, for one of his familiar acquaintance to say many things of his poems, and chiefly of his life, that may serve for the information of his readers, if not for the encrease of his name; which, without any such helps, is already sufficiently established.

THIS, Sir, were an argument most proper for you to manage, in respect of your great abilities, and the long friendship you maintained with him. But you have an obstinate aversion from publishing any of your Writings. I guess what pretence you have for it, and that you are confirmed in this resolution by the prodigious multitude and imperfections of us writers of this age. I will not now dispute, whether you are in the right, though I am confident you would contribute more to our reformation by your example, than reproofs. But however, seeing you persist in your purpose,

blow

B 2

and

and have refused to adorn even this very subject, which you love so well; I beg your assistance while I myself undertake it. This I do with the greater willingness, because I believe there is no man, who speaks of Mr. COWLEY, that can want either matter or words. I only therefore intreat you to give me leave to make you a party in this relation, by using your name and your testimony. For by this means, though the memory of our friend shall not be delivered to posterity with the advantage of your wit, which were most to be desired; yet his praise will be strengthened by the consent of your judgement, and the authority of your approbation.

MR. A. COWLEY was born in the city of London, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighteen. His parents were citizens of a virtuous life and sufficient estate, and so the condition of his fortune was equal to the temper of his mind, which was always content with moderate things.

The

The first years of his youth were spent in Westminster-school, where he soon obtained and increased the noble genius peculiar to that place. The occasion of his first inclination to poetry, was his casual lighting on SPENSER's *Fairy Queen*, when he was but just able to read. That indeed is a poem fitter for the examination of men, than the consideration of a child. But in him it met with a fancy, whose strength was not to be judged by the number of his years.

In the thirteenth year of his age there came forth a little book under his name, in which there were many things that might well become the vigour and force of a manly wit. The first beginning of his studies, was a familiarity with the most solid and unaffected authors of antiquity, which he fully digested, not only in his memory, but his judgement. By this advantage he learnt nothing while a boy, that he needed to forget or forsake, when he

came to be a man. His mind was rightly seasoned at first; and he had nothing to do, but still to proceed on the same foundation on which he began.

He was wont to relate, that he had this defect in his memory at that time, that his teachers could never bring it to retain the ordinary rules of grammar. However, he supplied that want, by conversing with the books themselves, from whence those rules had been drawn. That, no doubt, was a better way, though much more difficult; and he afterwards found this benefit by it, that, having got the Greek and Roman languages, as he had done his own, not by precept but use, he practised them, not as a scholar but a native.

With these extraordinary hopes he was removed to Trinity Colledge in Cambridge, where, by the progress and continuance of his wit, it appeared that two things were joined in it, which seldom meet

meet together, that it was both early-ripe and lasting. This brought him into the love and esteem of the most eminent members of that famous society, and principally of your uncle Mr. FOTHERBY, whose favours he since abundantly acknowledged, when his benefactor had quite forgot the obligation. His exercises of all kinds are still remembered in that university with great applause, and with this particular praise, that they were not only fit for the obscurity of an academical life, but to have been shown on the true theatre of the world. There it was that, before the twentieth year of his age, he laid the design of divers of his most masculine works, that he finished long after. In which I know not whether I should most commend, that a mind so young should conceive such great things, or that it should be able to perfect them with such felicity.

THE first occasion of his entering into business, was the elegy that he writ on Mr.

HERVEY's death: wherein he described the highest characters of religion, knowledge, and friendship, in an age when most other men scarce begin to learn them. This brought him into the acquaintance of Mr. JOHN HERVEY, the brother of his deceased friend, from whom he received many offices of kindness through the whole course of his life, and principally this, that by his means he came into the service of my Lord ST. ALBANS.

WHEN the civil war broke out, his affection to the king's cause drew him to Oxford, as soon as it began to be the chief seat of the royal party. In that university he prosecuted the same studies with a like success. Nor in the mean time was he wanting to his duty in the war itself, for he was present and in service in several of the king's journies and expeditions. By these occasions and the report of his high deserts, he speedily grew familiar to the chief men of the court and
the

the gown, whom the fortune of the war had drawn together. And particularly, though he was then very young, he had the entire friendship of my Lord FALKLAND, one of the principal secretaries of state. That affection was contracted by the agreement of their learning and manners. For you may remember, Sir, we have often heard Mr. COWLEY admire him, not only for the profoundness of his knowledge, which was applauded by all the world, but more especially for those qualities which he himself more regarded, for his generosity of mind, and his neglect of the vain pomp of human greatness.

DURING the heat of the civil war, he was settled in my Lord ST. ALBANS' family, and attended her majesty the queen-mother, when, by the unjust persecution of her subjects, she was forced to retire into France. Upon this wandering condition of the most vigorous part of his life, he was wont to reflect, as the cause of the long
inter-

interruption of his studies. Yet we have no reason to think that he lost so great a space of time, if we consider in what business he employed his banishment. He was absent from his native country above twelve years; which were wholly spent either in bearing a share in the distresses of the royal family, or in labouring in their affairs. To this purpose he performed several dangerous journies into Jersey, Scotland, Flanders, Holland, or wherever else the king's troubles required his attendance. But the chief testimony of his fidelity was, the laborious service he underwent in maintaining the constant correspondence between the late king and the queen his wife. In that weighty trust he behaved himself with indefatigable integrity, and unsuspected secrecy. For he cyphered and decyphered, with his own hand, the greatest part of all the letters that passed between their majesties, and managed a vast intelligence in many other parts: which for some years together took up all his days, and two or three nights every week.

AT

At length, upon his present majesty's removal out of France, and the queen-mother's staying behind, the business of that nature passed of course into other hands. Then it was thought fit, by those on whom he depended, that he should come over into England, and, under pretence of privacy and retirement, should take occasion of giving notice of the posture of things in this nation. Upon his return, he found his country groaning under the oppression of an unjust usurpation. And he soon felt the effects of it. For, while he lay hid in London, he was seized on by a mistake, the search having been intended after another gentleman, of considerable note in the king's party. Being made a prisoner, he was often examined before the usurpers, who tried all imaginable ways to make him serviceable to their ends. That course not prevailing, he was committed to a severe restraint; and scarce at last obtained his liberty upon the hard terms of a thou-

a thousand pound bail, which burden Dr. SCARBOROUGH very honourably took upon himself. Under these bonds he continued till the general redemption. Yet, taking the opportunity of the confusions that followed upon CROMWELL's death, he ventured back into France, and there remained in the same station as before, till near the time of the king's return.

THIS certainly, Sir, is abundantly sufficient to justify his loyalty to all the world; though some have indeavoured to bring it in question, upon occasion of a few lines in the Preface to one of his books. The objection I must not pass by in silence, because it was the only part of his life, that was liable to misinterpretation, even by the confession of those that envied his fame. In this case perhaps it were enough, to alledge for him to men of moderate minds, that what he there said was published before a book of poetry, and so ought rather to be esteemed as a problem of his

his fancy and invention, than as the real image of his judgement. But his defence in this matter may be laid on a surer foundation. This is the true reason that is to be given of his delivering that opinion. Upon his coming over, he found the state of the royal party very desperate. He perceived the strength of their enemies so united, that, till it should begin to break within itself, all endeavours against it were like to prove unsuccessful. On the other side, he beheld their zeal for his majesty's cause to be still so active, that it often hurried them into inevitable ruin. He saw this with much grief. And though he approved their constancy as much as any man living, yet he found their unseasonable shewing it, did only disable themselves, and give their adversaries great advantages of riches and strength by their defeats. He therefore believed that it would be a meritorious service to the king, if any man, who was known to have followed his interest, could insinuate into the
usurper's

usurpers minds, that men of his principles were now willing to be quiet, and could persuade the poor oppressed royalists to conceal their affections, for better occasions. And as for his own particular, he was a close prisoner when he writ that against which the exception is made; so that he saw it was impossible for him to pursue the ends for which he came hither, if he did not make some kind of declaration of his peaceable intentions. This was then his opinion. And the success of things seems to prove, that it was not very ill grounded. For certainly it was one of the greatest helps to the king's affairs, about the latter end of that tyranny, that many of his best friends dissembled their counsels, and acted the same designs, under the disguises and names of other parties.

THIS, Sir, you can testify to have been the innocent occasion of these words, on which so much clamour was raised. Yet, seeing his good intentions were so ill interpreted,

preted, he told me, the last time that ever I saw him, that he would have them omitted in the next impression: of which his friend Mr. Cook is a witness. However, if we should take them in the worst sense of which they are capable: yet methinks for his maintaining one false tenet in the political philosophy, he made a sufficient atonement by a continual service of twenty years, by the perpetual loyalty of his discourse, and by many of his other writings, wherein he has largely defended and adorned the royal cause. And to speak of him, not as our friend, but according to the common laws of humanity; certainly, that life must needs be very unblameable, which had been tried in business of the highest consequence, and practised in the hazardous secrets of courts and cabinets; and yet there can nothing disgraceful be produced against it, but only the error of one paragraph, and a single metaphor.

BUT to return to my narration, which this digression has interrupted: Upon the

king's happy restoration, Mr. COWLEY was past the fortieth year of his age; of which the greatest part had been spent in a various and tempestuous condition. He now thought he had sacrificed enough of his life to his curiosity and experience. He had enjoyed many excellent occasions of observation. He had been present in many great revolutions, which in that tumultuous time disturbed the peace of all our neighbour-states, as well as our own. He had nearly beheld all the splendour of the highest part of mankind. He had lived in the presence of princes, and familiarly conversed with greatness in all its degrees, which was necessary for one that would contemn it aright: for to scorn the pomp of the world before a man knows it, does commonly proceed rather from ill-manners than a true magnanimity.

He was now weary of the vexations and formalities of an active condition. He had been perplexed with a long compliance to foreign

foreign manners. He was satiated with the arts of court: which sort of life, though his virtue had made innocent to him, yet nothing could make it quiet. These were the reasons that moved him to forego all public employments, and to follow the violent inclination of his own mind, which, in the greatest throng of his former business, had still called upon him, and represented to him the true delights of solitary studies, of temperate pleasures, and of a moderate revenue, below the malice and flatteries of fortune.

At first he was but slenderly provided for such a retirement, by reason of his travels, and the afflictions of the party to which he adhered, which had put him quite out of all the roads of gain. Yet, notwithstanding the narrowness of his income, he remained fixed to his resolution, upon his confidence in the temper of his own mind, which he knew had contracted its desires into so small a compass, that a

very few things would supply them all. But upon the settlement of the peace of our nation, this hinderance of his design was soon removed: for he then obtained a plentiful estate, by the favour of my Lord ST. ALBANS, and the bounty of my Lord Duke of BUCKINGHAM, to whom he was always most dear, and whom he ever respected, as his principal patrons. The last of which great men, you know, Sir, it is my duty to mention, not only for Mr. COWLEY's sake, but my own: though I cannot do it, without being ashamed, that, having the same encourager of my studies, I should deserve his patronage so much less.

Thus he was sufficiently furnished for his retreat. And immediately he gave over all pursuit of honour and riches, in a time, when, if any ambitious or covetous thoughts had remained in his mind, he might justly have expected to have them readily satisfied. In his last seven or eight years,

years, he was concealed in his beloved obscurity, and possessed that solitude, which from his very childhood he had always most passionately desired. Though he had frequent invitations to return into business, yet he never gave ear to any persuasions of profit or preferment. His visits to the city and court were very few: his stays in town were only as a passenger, not an inhabitant. The places that he chose for the seats of his declining life, were two or three villages on the bank of the Thames. During this recess, his mind was rather exercised on what was to come than what was passed; he suffered no more business nor cares of life to come near him, than what were enough to keep his soul awake, but not to disturb it. Some few friends and books, a chearful heart, and innocent conscience, were his constant companions. His poetry indeed he took with him, but he made that an anchorite as well as himself: he only dedicated it to the service of his Maker, to describe the great images

of religion and virtue wherewith his mind abounded. And he employed his music to no other use, than as his own DAVID did towards SAUL, by singing the praises of God and of Nature, to drive the evil spirit out of men's minds.

OF his works that are published, it is hard to give one general character, because of the difference of their subjects, and the various forms and distant times of their writing. Yet this is true of them all, that in all the several shapes of his style, there is still very much of the likeness and impression of the same mind; the same unaffected modesty, and natural freedom, and easy vigour, and chearful passions, and innocent mirth, which appeared in all his manners. We have many things that he writ in two very unlike conditions, in the university and the court. But in his poetry, as well as his life, he mingled with excellent skill what was good in both states. In his life he joined the innocence and
I sincerity

sincerity of the scholar with the humanity and good behaviour of the courtier. In his poems he united the solidity and art of the one, with the gentility and gracefulness of the other.

If any shall think that he was not wonderfully curious in the choice and elegance of all his words: I will affirm with more truth on the other side, that he had no manner of affectation in them; he took them as he found them made to his hands; he neither went before, nor came after, the use of the age. He forsook the conversation, but never the language, of the city and court. He understood exceeding well all the variety and power of poetical numbers; and practised all sorts with great happiness. If his verses in some places seem not as soft and flowing as some would have them, it was his choice, not his fault. He knew that, in diverting men's minds, there should be the same variety observed as in the prospects of their eyes: where a

rock, a precipice, or a rising wave, is often more delightful than a smooth, even ground, or a calm sea. Where the matter required it, he was as gentle as any man. But where higher virtues were chiefly to be regarded, an exact numerosity was not then his main care. This may serve to answer those who upbraid some of his pieces with roughness, and with more contractions than they are willing to allow. But these admirers of gentleness without sinews, should know that different arguments must have different colours of speech: that there is a kind of variety of sexes in poetry, as well as in mankind: that, as the peculiar excellence of the feminine kind is smoothness and beauty; so strength is the chief praise of the masculine.

He had a perfect mastery in both the languages in which he writ: but each of them kept a just distance from the other; neither did his Latin make his English too old, nor his English make his Latin too modern.

modern. He excelled both in prose and verse; and both together have that perfection, which is commended by some of the ancients above all others, that they are very obvious to the conception, but most difficult in the imitation.

His fancy flowed with great speed, and therefore it was very fortunate to him, that his judgement was equal to manage it. He never runs his reader nor his argument out of breath. He perfectly practises the hardest secret of good writing, to know when he has done enough. He always leaves off in such a manner, that it appears it was in his power to have said much more. In the particular expressions there is still much to be applauded, but more in the disposition and order of the whole. From thence there springs a new comeliness, besides the feature of each part. His invention is powerful, and large as can be desired. But it seems all to arise out of the nature of the subject, and to be

just fitted for the thing of which he speaks. If ever he goes far for it, he dissembles his pains admirably well.

THE variety of arguments that he has managed is so large, that there is scarce any particular of all the passions of men, or works of nature and providence, which he has passed by undescribed. Yet he still observes the rules of decency with so much care, that whether he inflames his reader with the softer affections, or delights him with inoffensive raillery, or teaches the familiar manners of life, or adorns the discoveries of philosophy, or inspires him with the heroic characters of charity and religion: to all these matters, that are so wide asunder, he still proportions a due figure of speech, and a proper measure of wit. This indeed is most remarkable, that a man who was so constant and fixed in the moral ideas of his mind, should yet be so changeable in his intellectual, and in both to the highest degree of excellence.

IF

But if there needed any excuse to be made, that his love-verses should take up so great a share in his works; it may be alledged, that they were compos'd when he was very young. But it is a vain thing to make any kind of apology for that sort of writings. If devout or virtuous men will superciliously forbid the minds of the young, to adorn those subjects about which they are most conversant: they would put them out of all capacity of performing graver matters, when they come to them. For the exercises of all mens wits must be always proper for their age, and never too much above it: and by practice and use in lighter arguments, they grow up at last to excel in the most weighty. I am not therefore ashamed to commend Mr. CowLEY's mistress. I only except one or two expressions, which I wish I could have prevailed with those that had the right of the other edition, to have left out. But of all the rest I dare boldly pronounce, that
never

never yet so much was written on a subject so delicate, that can less offend the severest rules of morality. The whole passion of love is inimitably described, with all its mighty train of hopes, and joys, and disquiets. Besides this amorous tenderness, I know not how, in every copy, there is something of more useful knowledge very naturally and gracefully insinuated; and every where there may be something found, to inform the minds of wise men, as well as to move the hearts of young men, or women.

THE occasion of his falling on the Pindaric way of writing, was his accidental meeting with PINDAR's works, in a place where he had no other books to direct him. Having then considered at leisure the height of his invention, and the majesty of his style, he tried immediately to imitate it in English. And he performed it without the danger that HORACE presaged to the man who should dare to attempt it.

IF

If any are displeased at the boldness of his metaphors, and length of his digression, they contend not against Mr. CowLEY, but PINDAR himself; who was so much revered by all antiquity, that the place of his birth was preserved as sacred, when his native city was twice destroyed by the fury of two conquerors. If the irregularity of the number disgust them, they may observe that this very thing makes that kind of poesy fit for all manner of subjects: for the pleasant, the grave, the amorous, the heroic, the philosophical, the moral, the divine. Besides this, they will find, that the frequent alteration of the rhythm and feet affects the mind with a more various delight, while it is soon apt to be tired by the settled pace of any one constant measure. But that for which I think this inequality of number is chiefly to be preferred, is its near affinity with prose: from which all other kinds of English verse are so far distant, that it is very seldom

seldom found that the same man excels in both ways. But now this loose and unconfin'd measure has all the grace and harmony of the most confin'd. And withal, it is so large and free, that the practice of it will only exalt, not corrupt, our prose: which is certainly the most useful kind of writing of all others: for it is the style of all business and conversation.

BESIDES this imitating of PINDAR, which may perhaps be thought rather a new sort of writing, than a restoring of an ancient; he has also been wonderfully happy, in translating many difficult parts of the noblest poets of antiquity. To perform this according to the dignity of the attempt, he had, as it was necessary he should have, not only the elegance of both the languages, but the true spirit of both the poetries. This way of leaving verbal translations, and chiefly regarding the sense and genius of the author, was scarce heard of in England, before this present age.

I will

I will not presume to say, that Mr. CowLEY was the absolute inventor of it. Nay, I know that others had the good luck to recommend it first in print. Yet I appeal to you, Sir, whether he did not conceive it, and discourse of it, and practise it, as soon as any man.

HIS Davideis was wholly written in so young an age; that, if we shall reflect on the vastness of the argument, and his manner of handling it, he may seem like one of the miracles that he there adorns, like a boy attempting Goliath. I have often heard you declare, that he had finished the greatest part of it, while he was yet a young student at Cambridge. This perhaps may be the reason, that in some few places, there is more youthfulness and redundance of fancy than his riper judgement would have allowed. I know, Sir, you will give me leave to use this liberty of censure; for I do not here pretend to a professed panegyric, but rather to give a just opinion concerning

from being a debasing of divinity, to make some parts of it the subjects of our fancy, that it is a sure way to establish it familiarly on the hearts of the people, and to give it a durable impression on the minds of wise men. Of this we have a powerful instance amongst the antients. For their wit has lasted much longer than the practice of any of their religions. And the very memory of most of their divine worship had perished, if it had not been expressed and preserved by their poets. But Mr. COWLEY himself did of all men living abhor the abuse of scripture by licentious raillery; which ought not only to be esteemed the meanest kind of wit, but the worst sort of ill-manners. This perhaps some men would be loth to hear proved, who practise it under the false title of a genteel quality: but the truth of it is unquestionable. For the ordinary ill-breeding is only an indecency and offence against some particular custom, or gesture, or behaviour in use. But this prophane-
ness

ness is a violation of the very support of human society, and a rudeness against the best manners, that all mankind can practise, which is a just reverence of the Supreme Power of all the world.

In his Latin poems he has expressed to admiration, all the numbers of verse, and figures of poetry, that are scattered up and down amongst the ancients. There is hardly to be found in them all any good fashion of speech, or colour of measure, but he has comprehended it, and given instances of it, according as his several arguments required either a majestic spirit, or a passionate, or a pleasant. This is the more extraordinary, in that it was never yet performed by any single poet of the ancient Romans themselves. They had the language natural to them, and so might easily have moulded it into what form or humour they pleased: yet it was their constant custom, to confine all their thoughts and practice to one or two ways of writing,

as despairing ever to compass all together. This is evident in those that excelled in odes and songs, in the comical, tragical, epical, elegiacal, or satyrical way. And this perhaps occasioned the first distinction and number of the muses. For they thought the task too hard for any one of them, though they fancied them to be goddesses. And therefore they divided it among them all, and only recommended to each of them, the care of a distinct character of poetry and music.

THE occasion of his chusing the subject of his six books of plants, was this; when he returned into England, he was advised to dissemble the main intention of his coming over, under the disguise of applying himself to some settled profession. And that of physic was thought most proper. To this purpose, after many anatomical dissections, he proceeded to the consideration of Simples; and having furnished himself with books of that nature, he retired

retired into a fruitful part of Kent, where every field and wood might shew him the real figures of those plants of which he read. Thus he speedily mastered that part of the art of medicine. But then, as one of the ancients did before him in the study of the law, instead of employing his skill for practice and profit, he presently digested it into that form which we behold.

THE two first books treat of herbs, in a style resembling the elegies of Ovid and Tibullus, in the sweetness and freedom of the verse: but excelling them in the strength of the fancy, and vigour of the sense. The third and fourth discourse of flowers in all the variety of CATULLUS and HORACE's numbers: for the last of which authors he had a peculiar reverence, and imitated him, not only in the stately and numerous pace of his odes and epodes, but in the familiar easiness of his epistles and speeches. The two last speak of trees, in the way of VIRGIL's Georgics. Of

these the sixth book is wholly dedicated to the honour of his country. For, making the British oak to preside in the assembly of the forest trees, upon that occasion he enlarges on the history of our late troubles, the king's affliction and return, and the beginning of the Dutch war: and manages all in a style, that (to say all in a word) is equal to the greatness and valour of the English nation.

I TOLD you, Sir, that he was very happy in the way of HORACE's speeches. But of this there are but two instances preserved: that part of an epistle to Mr. CRESWEL, with which he concludes his preface to his book of plants: and that copy which is written to yourself. I confess I heartily wish he had left more examples behind him of this kind: because I esteem it to be one of the best and most difficult, of all those that antiquity has taught us. It is certainly the very original of true raillery; and differs as much
from

from some of the other Latin satyrs, as the pleasant reproofs of a gentleman, from the severity of a school-master. I know some men disapprove it, because the verse seems to be loose, and near to the plainness of common discourse. But that which was admired by the court of Augustus, never ought to be esteemed flat, or vulgar. And the same judgement should be made of mens styles, as of their behaviour and carriage: wherein that is most courtly, and hardest to be imitated, which consists of a natural easiness and unaffected grace, where nothing seems to be studied, yet every thing is extraordinary.

THIS familiar way of verse puts me in mind of one kind of prose wherein Mr. COWLEY was excellent; and that is his letters to his private friends. In these he always expressed the native tenderness and innocent gaiety of his mind. I think, Sir, you and I have the greatest collection of this sort. But I know you agree with me,

that nothing of this nature should be published : and herein you have always consented to approve of the modest judgement of our countrymen above the practice of some of our neighbours, and chiefly of the French. I make no manner of question, but the English at this time are infinitely improved in this way, above the skill of former ages, nay, of all countries round about us, that pretend to greater eloquence. Yet they have been always judiciously sparing, in printing such composures, while some other witty nations have tired all their presses and readers with them. The truth is, the letters that pass between particular friends, if they are written as they ought to be, can scarce ever be fit to see the light. They should not consist of fulsome compliments, or tedious politics, or elaborate elegancies, or general fancies. But they should have a native clearness and shortness, a domestical plainness, and a peculiar kind of familiarity ; which can only affect the humour of those to whom they were intended.

intended. The very same passages, which make writings of this nature delightful amongst friends, will lose all manner of taste, when they come to be read by those that are indifferent. In such letters the souls of men should appear undressed; and in that negligent habit, they may be fit to be seen by one or two in a chamber, but not to go abroad into the street,

THE last pieces, that we have from his hands, are discourses, by way of essays, upon some of the gravest subjects that concern the contentment of a virtuous mind. These he intended as a real character of his own thoughts, upon the point of his retirement. And accordingly you may observe, that in the prose of them, there is little curiosity of ornament, but they are written in a lower and humbler style than the rest, and, as an unfeigned image of his soul should be drawn, without flattery. I do not speak this to their disadvantage. For the true perfection of wit is, to be pliable to all occasions,

casions, to walk or fly, according to the nature of every subject. And there is no doubt as much art, to have only plain conceptions on some arguments, as there is in others to have extraordinary flights.

To these, that he has here left scarce finished, it was his design to have added many others. And a little before his death, he communicated to me his resolutions, to have dedicated them all to my Lord ST. ALBANS, as a testimony of his entire respects to him; and a kind of apology for having left human affairs, in the strength of his age, while he might still have been serviceable to his country. But, though he was prevented in this purpose by his death, yet it becomes the office of a friend to make good his intentions. I therefore here presume to make a present of them to his Lordship. I doubt not but, according to his usual humanity, he will accept this imperfect legacy, of the man whom he long honoured with his domestic conversation.

fation: And I am confident his Lordship will believe it to be no injury to his fame, that in these papers my Lord ST. ALBANS and Mr. COWLEY's name shall be read together by posterity.

I MIGHT, Sir, have made a longer discourse of his writings, but that I think it fit to direct my speech concerning him, by the same rule by which he was wont to judge of others. In his esteem of other men, he constantly preferred the good temper of their minds, and honesty of their actions, above all the excellencies of their eloquence or knowledge. The same course I will take in his praise, which chiefly ought to be fixed on his life. For that he deserves more applause from the most virtuous men, than for his other abilities he ever obtained from the learned.

He had indeed a perfect natural goodness, which neither the uncertainties of his condition, nor the largeness of his wit, could

could pervert. He had a firmness and strength of mind, that was of proof against the art of poetry itself. Nothing vain or fantastical, nothing flattering or insolent, appeared in his humour. He had a great integrity and plainness of manners; which he preserved to the last, though much of his time was spent in a nation, and way of life, that is not very famous for sincerity. But the truth of his heart was above the corruption of ill examples; and therefore the sight of them rather confirmed him in the contrary virtues.

THERE was nothing affected or singular in his habit, or person, or gesture. He understood the forms of good-breeding enough to practise them without burdening himself or others. He never oppressed any man's parts, nor ever put any man out of countenance. He never had any emulation for fame, or contention for profit with any man. When he was in business, he suffered others importunities with much easiness :

easiness: when he was out of it, he was never importunate himself. His modesty and humility were so great, that, if he had not had many other equal virtues, they might have been thought dissimulation.

His conversation was certainly of the most excellent kind; for it was such as was rather admired by his familiar friends, than by strangers at first sight. He surprized no man at first with any extraordinary appearance: he never thrust himself violently into the good opinion of his company. He was content to be known by leisure and by degrees: and so the esteem, that was conceived of him, was better grounded and more lasting.

In his speech, neither the pleasantness excluded gravity, nor was the sobriety of it inconsistent with delight. No man parted willingly from his discourse: for he so ordered it, that every man was satisfied that he had his share. He governed his passions
with

with great moderation. His virtues were never troublesome or uneasy to any. Whatever he disliked in others, he only corrected it, by the silent reproof of a better practice.

His wit was so tempered, that no man had ever reason to wish it had been less: he prevented other men's severity upon it by his own: he never willingly recited any of his writings. None but his intimate friends ever discovered he was a great poet, by his discourse. His learning was large and profound, well composed of all ancient and modern knowledge. But it sat exceeding close and handsomely upon him: it was not embossed on his mind, but enamelled.

He never guided his life by the whispers or opinions of the world: yet he had a great reverence for a good reputation. He hearkened to fame when it was a just censurer: but not when an extravagant babler.

He

He was a passionate lover of liberty and freedom from restraint both in actions and words: but what honesty others receive from the direction of laws, he had by native inclination; and he was not beholding to other men's wills, but to his own, for his innocence.

He performed all his natural and civil duties with admirable tenderness. Having been born after his father's death, and bred up under the discipline of his mother, he gratefully acknowledged her care of his education to her death, which was in the eightieth year of her age. For his three brothers he always maintained a constant affection. And having survived the two first, he made the third his heir. In his long dependance on my Lord ST. ALBANS, there never happened any manner of difference between them: except a little at last, because he would leave his service: which only shewed the innocence of the servant, and the kindness of the master.

His friendships were inviolable. The same men with whom he was familiar in his youth, were his nearest acquaintance at the day of his death. If the private course of his last years made him contract his conversation to a few, yet he only withdrew, not broke off, from any of the others.

His thoughts were never above nor below his condition. He never wished his estate much larger. Yet he enjoyed what he had with all innocent freedom; he never made his present life uncomfortable, by undue expectations of future things. Whatever disappointments he met with, they only made him understand fortune better, not repine at her the more: his muse indeed once complained, but never his mind. He was accomplished with all manner of abilities for the greatest business; if he would but have thought so himself.

If any thing ought to have been changed in his temper, and disposition; it was his

his earnest affection for obscurity and retirement. This, Sir, give me leave to condemn, even to you, who I know agreed with him in the same humour. I acknowledge he chose that state of life, not out of any poetical rapture, but upon a steady and sober experience of human things. But however, I cannot applaud it in him. It is certainly a great disparagement to virtue, and learning itself, that those very things which only make men useful in the world, should incline them to leave it. This ought never to be allowed to good men, unless the bad had the same moderation, and were willing to follow them into the wilderness. But, if the one shall contend to get out of employment, while the other strive to get into it, the affairs of mankind are like to be in so ill a posture, that even the good men themselves will hardly be able to enjoy their very retreats in security.

YET I confess, if any deserved to have this privilege, it ought to have been granted
ed

ed to him, as soon as any man living, upon consideration of the manner in which he spent the liberty that he got. For he withdrew himself out of the crowd, with desires of enlightening and instructing the minds of those that remained in it. It was his resolution in that station to search into the secrets of divine and human knowledge, and to communicate what he should observe. He always professed, that he went out of the world, as it was man's, into the same world, as it was nature's, and as it was God's. The whole compass of the creation, and all the wonderful effects of the divine wisdom, were the constant prospect of his senses, and his thoughts. And indeed he entered with great advantage on the studies of nature, even as the first great men of antiquity did, who were generally both poets and philosophers. He betook himself to its contemplation, as well furnished with sound judgement, and diligent observation, and good method to discover its mysteries,

ries, as with abilities to set it forth in all its ornaments.

THIS labour about natural science was the perpetual and uninterrupted task of that obscure part of his life. Besides this, we had persuaded him to look back into his former studies, and to publish a discourse concerning style. In this he had designed, to give an account of the proper sorts of writing, that were fit for all manner of arguments, to compare the perfections and imperfections of the authors of antiquity, with those of this present age, and to deduce all down to the particular use of the English genius and language. This subject he was very fit to perform: it being most proper for him to be the judge, who had been the best practiser. But he scarce lived to draw the first lines of it. All the footsteps that I can find remaining of it, are only some indigested characters of ancient and modern authors. And now, for the future, I almost despair

ever to see it well accomplished, unless you, Sir, would give me leave to name the man that should undertake it.

BUT his last and principal design, was that which ought to be the principal to every wise man; the establishing his mind in the faith he professed. He was in his practice exactly obedient to the use and precepts of our church. Nor was he inclined to any uncertainty and doubt, as abhorring all contention in indifferent things, and much more in sacred. But he beheld the divisions of christendom: he saw how many controversies had been introduced by zeal or ignorance, and continued by faction. He had therefore an earnest intention of taking a review of the original principles of the primitive Church: believing that every true christian had no better means to settle his spirit, than that which was proposed to ÆNEAS and his followers, to be the end of their wanderings, *Antiquam exquirite Matrem.*

THIS

THIS examination he purposed should reach to our Saviour's and the Apostle's lives, and their immediate successors, for four or five centuries; till interest and policy prevailed over devotion. He hoped to have absolutely compassed it in three or four years, and when that was done, there to have fixed for ever, without any shaking or alteration in his judgement. Indeed it was a great damage to our church, that he lived not to perform it. For very much of the primitive light might have been expected, from a mind that was endued with the primitive meekness and innocence. And besides, such a work coming from one that was no divine, might have been, very useful for this age; wherein it is one of the principal cavils against religion, that it is only a matter of interest, and only supported for the gain of a particular profession.

BUT alas! while he was framing these great things in his thoughts, they were un-

fortunately cut off together with his life. His solitude, from the very beginning, had never agreed so well with the constitution of his body, as of his mind. The chief cause of it was, that out of haste to be gone away from the tumult and noise of the city, he had not prepared so healthful a situation in the country, as he might have done, if he had made a more leisureable choice. Of this he soon began to find the inconvenience at Barn-Elms, where he was afflicted with a dangerous and lingering fever. After that, he scarce ever recovered his former health, though his mind was restored to its perfect vigour: as may be seen by his two last books of plants, that were written since that time, and may at least be compared with the best of his other works. Shortly after his removal to Chertsea, he fell into another consuming disease. Having languished under this for some months, he seemed to be pretty well cured of its ill symptoms. But in the heat of the last summer, by staying too long

long amongst his labourers in the meadows; he was taken with a violent defluxion, and stoppage in his breast, and throat. This he at first neglected, as an ordinary cold; and refused to send for his usual physicians, till it was past all remedies; and so in the end, after a fortnight's sickness, it proved mortal to him.

Who can here, Sir, forbear exclaiming on the weak hopes, and frail condition of human nature? For as long as Mr. COWLEY was pursuing the course of ambition, in an active life, which he scarce esteemed his true life: he never wanted a constant health, and strength of body. But as soon as ever he had found an opportunity of beginning indeed to live, and to enjoy himself in security, his contentment was first broken by sickness, and at last his death was occasioned by his very delight in the country and the fields, which he had long fancied above all other pleasures. But let us not grieve at this fatal

accident upon his account, lest we should seem to repine at the happy change of his condition, and not to know that the loss of a few years, which he might longer have lived, will be recompenced by an immortal memory. If we complain, let it only be for our own sakes: that in him we are at once deprived of the greatest natural and improved abilities, of the usefulest conversation, of the faithfulest friendship, of a mind that practised the best virtues itself, and a wit that was best able to recommend them to others.

His body was attended to Westminster Abbey by a great number of persons of the most eminent quality, and followed with the praises of all good and learned men. It lies near the ashes of CHAUCER and SPENSER, the two most famous English poets of former times. But whoever would do him right, should not only equal him to the principal ancient writers of our own nation, but should also rank his name
amongst

amongst the authors of the true antiquity, the best of the Greeks and Romans. In that place there is a monument designed for him, by my Lord Duke of BUCKINGHAM, in testimony of his affection. And the King himself was pleased to bestow on him the best epitaph, when, upon the news of his death, his Majesty declared [a], *That Mr. COWLEY had not left a better man behind him in England.*

THIS, Sir, is the account that I thought fit to present the world concerning him. Perhaps it may be judged, that I have spent too many words on a private man, and a scholar: whose life was not remarkable for such a variety of events, as are wont to be the ornaments of this kind of relations. I know it is the custom of the world to prefer the pompous histories of great men, before the greatest virtues of

[a]—*his Majesty declared, &c.*] Which only shews, that the curse of PERSIUS had fallen upon that prince—*Virtutem videant, intabescantque reliâ!* Sat. iii. 35.

others, whose lives have been led in a course less illustrious. This indeed is the general humour. But I believe it to be an error in mens judgements. For certainly that is a more profitable instruction, which may be taken from the eminent goodness of men of lower rank, than that which we learn from the splendid representations of the battles, and victories, and buildings, and sayings of great commanders and princes. Such specious matters, as they are seldom delivered with fidelity, so they serve but for the imitation of a very few, and rather make for the ostentation than the true information of human life. Whereas it is from the practice of men equal to ourselves, that we are more naturally taught how to command our passions, to direct our knowledge, and to govern our actions.

For this reason I have some hope, that a character of Mr. COWLEY may be of good advantage to our nation. For what he wanted in titles of honour, and the gifts
of

of fortune, was plentifully supplied by many other excellencies, which make perhaps less noise, but are more beneficial for example. This, Sir, was the principal end of this long discourse. Besides this, I had another design in it, that only concerns ourselves; that, having this picture of his life set before us, we may still keep him alive in our memories, and by this means may have some small reparation, for our inexpressible loss by his death.

S I R,

I am,

Your most humble,

and most affectionate Servant,

T. SPRAT.

of fortune, was plentifully supplied by many other excellencies, which make up for its noise, but are more beneficial for example. This, Sir, was the principal end of this long discourse. Besides this, I had another design in it, that only concerns ourselves; that, having this picture of his life before us, we may still keep him alive in our memories, and by this means may have some small reputation, for our inestimable loss by his death.

I am, Sir, Your most humble servant,
and most affectionate friend,
T. SPURAT.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

E L E G I A

DEDICATORIA,

A D

ILLUSTRISSIMAM ACADEMIAM

CANTABRIGIENSEM.

HOC tibi de nato, ditissima mater, egeno
Exiguum immensi pignus amoris habe.

Heu, meliora tibi depromere dona volentes

Astringit gratas parciore manus.

Tunc tui poteris vocem hinc agnoscere nati

Tam malè formatam, dissimilemque tuæ?

Tunc hinc materni vestigia sacra decoris,

Tu speculum poteris hinc reperire tuum?

Post longum, dices, Coulei, sic mihi tempus?

Sic mihi speranti, perfide, multa redis?

Quæ, dices, Sagæ Lemurésque Dææque, nocentes,

Hunc mihi in infantis supposuere loco?

At tu, sancta parens, crudelis tu quoque, nati

Ne trahes dextrâ vulnera cruda rudi.

Hei

Hei mihi, quid fato genetrix accedis iniquo?

Sit fors, sed non sis, ipsa, noverca mihi.

Si mihi natali Musarumadolescere in arvo,

Si benè dilecto luxuriare solo,

Si mihi de doctâ licuisset plenius undâ

Haurire, ingentem si satiare sitim,

Non ego degeneri dubitabilis ore redirem,

Nec legeres nomen fusa rubore meum.

Scis benè, scis quæ me tempestas publica mundi

Raptatrix vestro sustulit è gremio,

Nec pede adhuc firmo, nec firmo dente, negati

Poscentem querulo murmure lactis opem.

Sic quondam, aërium vento bellante per æquor,

Cum gravidum autumnum sæva flagellat hyems,

Immatura suâ velluntur ab arbore poma,

Et vi victa cadunt; arbor & ipsa gemit.

Nondum succus inest terræ generosus avitæ,

Nondum sol roseo redditur ore pater.

O mihi jucundum Grantæ super omnia nomen!

O penitus toto corde receptus amor!

O pulchræ sine luxu ædes, vitæque beatæ,

Splendida paupertas, ingenuûsque decor!

O chara ante alias, magnorum nomine regum

Digna domus! Trini nomine digna Dei!

O nimium Cereris cumulati munere campi,

Posthabitis Ennæ quos colit illa jugis!

O sacri

DEDICATORIA

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O sacri fontes ! & sacra vatibus umbrae,
 Quas recreant avium Pieridumque chori !
 O Camus ! Phoebo nullus quo gratior annis !
 Annibus auriferis invidiosus inops !
 Ah mihi si vestrae reddat bona gaudia sedis,
 Detque Deus doctâ posse quiete frui !
 Qualis eram, cum me tranquillâ mente sedentem
 Vidisti in ripâ, Came serene, tuâ ;
 Mulcentem audisti puerili flumina cantu ;
 Ille quidem immerito, sed tibi gratus erat.
 Nam, memini ripâ cum tu dignatus utrâque,
 Dignatum est totum verba referre nemus.
 Tunc liquidis tacitisque simul mea vita diebus,
 Et similis vestrae candida fluxit aquae.
 At nunc coenosae lucēs, atque obice multo
 Rumpitur aetatis turbidus ordo meae.
 Quid mihi Sequana opus, Tamesisve aut Thybridis
 unda ?
 Tu potis es nostram tollere, Came, fitim.
 Felix, qui nunquam plus uno viderit amne !
 Quique eadem Salicis littora more colit !
 Felix, cui non tentatus fordescere mundus,
 Et cui pauperies nota nitere potest !
 Tempore cui nullo misera experientia constat,
 Ut res humanas sentiat esse nihil !

At nos exemplis fortunâ instruxit opimis,
Et documentorum satque superque dedit:
Cum capite avulsum diadema, infractâque sceptrâ,
Contusâsque hominum forte minante minas,
Parcarum ludos, & non tractabile fatum,
Et versas fundo vidimus orbis opes.
Quis poterit fragilem post talia credere puppim
Infami scopulis naufragiisque mari?
Tu quoque in hoc terræ tremuisti, Academia, motu,
(Nec frustra) atque ædes contremuere tuæ.
Contremuere ipsæ pácatae Palladis arcès;
Et timuit fulmen laurea sancta novum.
Ah quanquam iratum, pestem hanc avertere nûmen,
Nec saltem bellis ista licere, velit!
Nos, tua progenies, pereamus; & ecce, perimus!
In nos jus habeat: jus habet omne malum.
Tu stabilis brevium genus immortale nepotum
Fundes; nec tibi mors ipsa superstes erit:
Semper plena manens uteri de fonte perenni
Formosâs mittes ad mare mortis aquas.
Sic Venus humanâ quondam, Dea faucia dextrâ,
(Namque solent ipsis bella nocere Deis)
Imploravit opem superûm, questûsque cievit,
Tinxit adorandus candida membra cruor.
Quid quereris? contemne breves secura dolores;
Nam tibi ferre necem vulnera nulla valent.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

TO

His EDITION in Folio, 1656.

AT my return lately into England [b], I met by great accident (for such I account it to be, that any copy of it should be extant any where so long, unless at his house who printed it) a book entituled, *The Iron Age*, and published under my name, during the time of my absence. I wondered very much how one who could be so foolish to write so ill verses, should yet be so wise to set them forth as another man's rather than his own; though perhaps he might have made a better choice, and not fathered the bastard upon such a person, whose stock of reputation is, I fear, little enough for maintenance of his own numerous legitimate off-spring of that

[b] In 1656.

kind.

kind. It would have been much less injurious, if it had pleased the author to put forth some of my writings under his own name, rather than his own under mine; he had been in that a more pardonable plagiarist, and had done less wrong by robbery, than he does by such a bounty; for nobody can be justified by the imputation even of another's merit; and our own coarse cloaths are like to become us better, than those of another man, though never so rich; but these, to say the truth, were so beggarly, that I myself was ashamed to wear them. It was in vain for me, that I avoided censure by the concealment of my own writings, if my reputation could be thus executed *in effigie*, and impossible it is for any good name to be in safety, if the malice of witches have the power to consume and destroy it in an image of their own making. This indeed was so ill made, and so unlike, that I hope the charm took no effect. So that I esteem myself less prejudiced by it, than by that which

which has been done to me since, almost in the same kind; which is, the publication of some things of mine without my consent or knowledge, and those so mangled and imperfect, that I could neither with honour acknowledge, nor with honesty quite disavow, them. Of which sort, was a comedy called *The Guardian*, printed in the year 1650, but made and acted before the Prince, in his passage through Cambridge towards York, at the beginning of the late unhappy war; or rather neither made nor acted, but rough-drawn only, and repeated; for the haste was so great, that it could neither be revised or perfected by the author, nor learned without-book by the actors, nor set forth in any measure tolerably by the officers of the college. After the representation (which, I confess, was somewhat of the latest) I began to look it over, and changed it very much, striking out some whole parts, as that of the poet and the soldier; but I have lost the copy, and dare not think it

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deserves

deserves the pains to write it again, which makes me omit it in this publication, though there be some things in it which I am not ashamed of, taking the excuse of my age and small experience in human conversation when I made it. But as it is, it is only the hasty first-sitting of a picture, and therefore like to resemble me accordingly. From this which has happened to myself, I began to reflect on the fortune of almost all writers, and especially poets, whose works (commonly printed after their deaths) we find stuffed out, either with counterfeit pieces, like false money put in to fill up the bag, though it add nothing to the sum; or with such, which, though of their own coin, they would have called in themselves, for the baseness of the alloy: whether this proceed from the indiscretion of their friends, who think a vast heap of stones or rubbish a better monument than a little tomb of marble, or by the unworthy avarice of some stationers, who are content to diminish the value of the author,

thor, so they may increase the price of the book; and, like vintners, with sophisticate mixtures, spoil the whole vessel of wine, to make it yield more profit. This has been the case with SHAKESPEAR, FLETCHER, JONSON, and many others; part of whose poems I should take the boldness to prune and lop away, if the care of replanting them in print did belong to me [c]; neither would I make any scruple to cut off from some the unnecessary young suckers, and from others, the old withered branches; for a great wit is no more tied to live in a vast volume, than in a gigantic body; on the contrary, it is commonly more vigorous, the less space it animates. And, as STATIUS says of little TYDEUS [d],

——Totos infusa per artus

Major in exiguo regnabat corpore virtus.

I am not ignorant, that, by saying this of others, I expose myself to some raillery,

[c] The editor's apology, for the liberty taken in this edition, is here made by the author himself.

[d] Stat. Theb. l. i. 416.

for not using the same severe discretion in my own case, where it concerns me nearer : But though I publish here more than in strict wisdom I ought to have done, yet I have suppress'd and cast away more than I publish ; and, for the ease of myself and others, have lost, I believe too, more than both. And upon these considerations I have been persuaded to overcome all the just repugnances of my own modesty, and to produce these poems to the light and view of the world ; not, as a thing that I approved of in itself, but as a less evil, which I chose rather than to stay till it were done for me by somebody else, either surreptitiously before, or avowedly after, my death : and this will be the more excusable, when the reader shall know in what respects he may look upon me as a dead, or at least a dying person, and upon my muse in this action, as appearing, like the Emperor CHARLES the Fifth, and assisting at her own funeral.

For,

For, to make myself absolutely dead in a poetical capacity, my resolution at present is, never to exercise any more that faculty. It is, I confess, but seldom seen that the poet dies before the man; for when we once fall in love with that bewitching art, we do not use to court it as a mistress, but marry it as a wife, and take it for better or worse, as an inseparable companion of our whole life. But, as the marriages of infants do but rarely prosper, so no man ought to wonder at the diminution or decay of my affection to poesy; to which I had contracted myself so much under age, and so much to my own prejudice in regard of those more profitable matches, which I might have made among the richer sciences. As for the portion which this brings of fame, it is an estate (if it be any, for men are not oftener deceived in their hopes of widows, than in their opinion of, *Exegi monumentum ære perennius*) that hardly ever comes in whilst we are living to enjoy it, but is a fan-

tastical kind of reversion to our own selves : neither ought any man to envy poets this posthumous and imaginary happiness, since they find commonly so little in present, that it may be truly applied to them, which St. PAUL speaks of the first Christians, *If their reward be in this life, they are of all men the most miserable.*

AND, if in quiet and flourishing times they meet with so small encouragement, what are they to expect in rough and troubled ones ? If wit be such a plant, that it scarce receives heat enough to preserve it alive even in the summer of our cold climate, how can it choose but wither in a long and a sharp winter ? A warlike, various, and a tragical age is best to write of, but worst to write in. And I may, though in a very unequal proportion, assume that to myself, which was spoken by TULLY to a much better person, upon occasion of the civil wars and revolutions in his time, *Sed in te intuens, Brute, doleo : cujus*

P R E F A C E.

71

cujus in adolescentiam, per medias laudes, quasi quadrigis vebentem, transversa incurrit miseræ fortuna reipublicæ [e].

NEITHER is the present constitution of my mind more proper than that of the times for this exercise, or rather divertissement. There is nothing that requires so much serenity and chearfulness of spirit; it must not be either overwhelmed with the cares of life, or overcast with the clouds of melancholy and sorrow, or shaken and disturbed with the storms of injurious fortune; it must, like the halcyon, have fair weather to breed in. The soul must be filled with bright and delightful ideas, when it undertakes to communicate delight to others; which is the main end of poesy. One may see through the style of *Ovid de Trist.* the humbled and dejected condition of spirit with which he wrote it; there scarce remains any footstep of that genius,

Quem nec Jovis ira, nec ignes [f], &c.

[e] Cic. de Clar. Orator. § 331.

[f] Metam. l. xv. 871.

The cold of the country had stricken through all his faculties, and benumbed the very feet of his verses. He is himself, methinks, like one of the stories of his own *Metamorphosis*; and, though there remain some weak resemblances of OVID at Rome, it is but, as he says of NIOBE [g],

In vultu color est sine sanguine: lumina mœstis
Stant immota genis: nihil est in imagine vivi.—

Flet tamen.—

The truth is, for a man to write well, it is necessary to be in good humour; neither is wit less eclipsed with the unquietness of mind, than beauty with the indisposition of body. So that it is almost as hard a thing to be a poet in despite of fortune, as it is in despite of nature. For my own part, neither my obligations to the muses, nor expectations from them are so great, as that I should suffer myself on no considerations to be divorced, or that I should say like HORACE [b],

Quisquis erit vitæ, scribam, color,

[g] Ovid. *Metam.* l. vi. 304.

[b] Hor. *Sat.* l. ii. *Sat.* i.

I shall

I shall rather use his words in another place [z],

Vixi Camenis nuper idoneus,
Et militavi non sine gloria :

Nunc arma defunctumque bello
Barbiton hic paries habebit.

And this resolution of mine does the more besit me, because my desire has been for some years past (though the execution has been accidentally diverted) and does still vehemently continue, to retire myself to some of our American plantations, not to seek for gold, or enrich myself with the traffic of those parts (which is the end of most men that travel thither; so that of these Indies it is truer than it was of the former,

Impiger extremos currit mercator ad Indos
Per mare pauperiem fugiens — [k])

but to forsake this world for ever, with all the vanities and vexations of it, and to bury myself there in some obscure retreat

[i] Carm. l. iii. Ode 26. "Vixi puellis," &c.

[k] Hor. 1 Ep. i. 45.

(but

(but not without the consolation of letters and philosophy)

Oblitusque meorum, obliviscendus & illis—[*I*] as my former author speaks too, who has inticed me here, I know not how, into the pedantry of this heap of Latin sentences. And I think Dr. DONNE'S *Sundyal in a gnave* is not more useleſs and ridiculous, than poetry would be in that retirement. As this therefore is in a true ſenſe a kind of death to the muſes, and a real literal quitting of this world: ſo, methinks, I may make a juſt claim to the undoubted privilege of deceaſed poets, which is, to be read with more favour, than the living;

Tanti eſt ut placeam tibi, Perire [*m*].

HAVING been forced for my own neceſſary juſtification to trouble the reader with this long diſcourſe of the reaſons why I trouble him alſo with all the reſt of the book; I ſhall only add ſomewhat concerning the ſeveral parts of it, and ſome other pieces, which I have thought fit to

[*I*] Hor. 1. Ep. xi. 9.

[*m*] Martiaſ. 1. viii. ep. 69.

reject in this publication: as first, all those which I wrote at school, from the age of ten years, till after fifteen; for even so far backward there remain yet some traces of me in the little footsteps of a child; which, though they were then looked upon as commendable extravagances in a boy (men setting a value upon any kind of fruit before the usual season of it) yet I would be loth to be bound now to read them all over myself; and therefore should do ill to expect that patience from others. Besides, they have already past through several editions, which is a longer life than uses to be enjoyed by infants that are born before the ordinary terms. They had the good fortune then to find the world so indulgent (for, considering the time of their production, who could be so hard-hearted to be severe?) that I scarce yet apprehend so much to be censured for them, as for not having made advances afterwards proportionable to the speed of my setting out; and am obliged too in a man-
ner

ner by discretion to conceal and suppress them, as promises and instruments under my own hand, whereby I stood engaged for more than I have been able to perform; in which truly if I have failed, I have the real excuse of the honestest sort of bankrupts, which is, to have been made unsolvable, not so much by their own negligence and ill-husbandry, as by some notorious accidents and public disasters. In the next place, I have cast away all such pieces as I wrote during the time of the late troubles, with any relation to the differences that caused them; as, among others, three books of the civil war itself, reaching as far as the first battle of Newbury, where the succeeding misfortunes of the party stopt the work.

As for the ensuing book, it consists of four parts: the first is a Miscellany of several subjects, and some of them made when I was very young, which it is perhaps superfluous to tell the reader; I know
not

not by what chance I have kept copies of them; for they are but a very few in comparison of those which I have lost; and I think they have no extraordinary virtue in them, to deserve more care in preservation, than was bestowed upon their brethren; for which I am so little concerned, that I am ashamed of the arrogance of the word, when I said, I had lost them.

THE second, is called, *The Mistress, or Love-Verses*; for so it is, that poets are scarce thought freemen of their company, without paying some duties, and obliging themselves to be true to love. Sooner or later they must all pass through that trial, like some Mahometan monks, that are bound by their order, once at least, in their life, to make a pilgrimage to Mecca,

In furias ignemque ruunt; amor omnibus
idem [n].

But we must not always make a judgement of their manners from their writings of this kind; as the Romanists uncharitably

[n] Virg. Georg. iii. 244.

do

do of BEZA, for a few lascivious sonnets composed by him in his youth. It is not in this sense that poesy is said to be a kind of painting; it is not the picture of the poet, but of things and persons imagined by him. He may be in his own practice and disposition a philosopher, nay a stoic, and yet speak sometimes with the softness of an amorous Sappho —

Feret & rubus asper Amomum [o].

He professes too much the use of fables (though without the malice of deceiving) to have his testimony taken even against himself. Neither would I here be misunderstood, as if I affected so much gravity, as to be ashamed to be thought really in love. On the contrary, I cannot have a good opinion of any man, who is not at least capable of being so. But I speak it to excuse some expressions (if such there be) which may happen to offend the severity of supercilious readers; for much excess is to be allowed in love, and even more in poetry; so we avoid

[o] *Virg. Ecl. iii. 89.*

the

the two unpardonable vices in both, which are obscenity and prophaneness, of which I am sure, if my words be ever guilty, they have ill represented my thoughts and intentions. And if, notwithstanding all this, the lightness of the matter here displease any body; he may find wherewithal to content his more serious inclinations in the weight and height of the ensuing arguments.

For, as for the Pindaric Odes (which is third part) I am in great doubt whether they will be understood by most readers; nay, even by very many who are well enough acquainted with the common roads and ordinary tracks of poesy. They either are, or at least were meant to be, of that kind of style which DION. HALICARNASSEUS calls, Μεγαλοφύνης καὶ ἡδὲ καὶ δεινότητος, and which he attributes to ALCÆUS: the digressions are many, and sudden, and sometimes long, according to the fashion of all lyriques, and of PINDAR above all men living. The figures are unusual

usual and bold, even to temerity, and such as I durst not have to do withal in any other kind of poetry: the numbers are various and irregular, and sometimes (especially some of the long ones) seem harsh and uncouth, if the just measures and cadences be not observed in the pronunciation. So that almost all their sweetness and numerosity (which is to be found, if I mistake not, in the roughest, if rightly repeated) lies in a manner wholly at the mercy of the reader. I have briefly described the nature of these verses, in the Ode entitled, *The Resurrection*: and though the liberty of them may incline a man to believe them easy to be composed, yet the undertaker will find it otherwise —

— Ut sibi quivis

Speret idem, multum fudet, frustraue laboret
Aufus idem [p].

I COME now to the last part, which is Davideis, or an heroical poem of the troubles of DAVID; which I designed into

[p] Hor. A. P. 240.

twelve

twelve books; not for the tribes sake, but after the pattern of our master VIRGIL; and intended to close all with that most poetical and excellent elegy of DAVID on the death of SAUL and JONATHAN: for I had no mind to carry him quite on to his anointing at Hebron, because it is the custom of heroic poets (as we see by the examples of HOMER and VIRGIL, whom we should do ill to forsake to imitate others) never to come to the full end of their story; but only so near, that every one may see it; as men commonly play not out the game, when it is evident that they can win it, but lay down their cards, and take up what they have won: This I say, was the whole design, in which there are many noble and fertile arguments behind; as, the barbarous cruelty of SAUL to the priests at Nob, the several flights and escapes of DAVID, with the manner of his living in the Wilderness, the funeral of SAMUEL, the love of ABIGAIL, the sacking of Ziglaj, the loss and recovery

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covery

covery of DAVID's wives from the Amalekites, the witch of Endor, the war with the Philistines, and the battle of Gilboa; all which I meant to interweave upon several occasions, with most of the illustrious stories of the Old Testament, and to embellish with the most remarkable antiquities of the Jews, and of other nations before or at that age. But I have had neither leisure hitherto, nor have appetite at present to finish the work, or so much as to revise that part which is done with that care which I resolved to bestow upon it, and which the dignity of the matter well deserves. For what worthier subject could have been chosen among all the treasuries of past times, than the life of this young prince; who from so small beginnings, through such infinite troubles and oppositions, by such miraculous virtues and excellencies, and with such incomparable variety of wonderful actions and accidents, became the greatest monarch that ever sat on the most famous throne

throne of the whole earth? Whom should a poet more justly seek to honour, than the highest person who ever honoured his profession? whom a Christian poet, rather than the man after God's own heart, and the man who had that sacred pre-eminence above all other princes, to be the best and mightiest of that royal race from whence Christ himself, according to the flesh, disdained not to descend? When I consider this, and how many other bright and magnificent subjects of the like nature the holy scripture affords and proffers, as it were, to poesy, in the wise managing and illustrating whereof, the glory of God Almighty might be joined with the singular utility and noblest delight of mankind; it is not without grief and indignation that I behold that divine science employing all her inexhaustible riches of wit and eloquence, either in the wicked and beggarly flattery of great persons, or the unmanly idolizing of foolish women, or the wretched affectation of scurril

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laughter,

laughter, or at best on the confused antiquated dreams of senseless fables and metamorphoses. Amongst all holy and consecrated things, which the devil ever stole and alienated from the service of the Deity; as altars, temples, sacrifices, prayers, and the like; there is none that he so universally, and so long usurpt, as poetry. It is time to recover it out of the tyrant's hands, and to restore it to the kingdom of God, who is the father of it. It is time to baptize it in Jordan, for it will never become clean by bathing in the water of Damascus. There wants, methinks, but the conversion of that, and the Jews, for the accomplishment of the kingdom of Christ. And as men, before their receiving of the faith, do not without some carnal reluctancies apprehend the bonds and fetters of it, but find it afterwards to be the truest and greatest liberty: it will fare no otherwise with this art, after the regeneration of it; it will meet with wonderful variety of new, more beautiful,

tiful, and more delightful objects ; neither will it want room, by being confined to heaven. There is not so great a lye to be found in any poet, as the vulgar conceit of men, that lying is essential to good poetry. Were there never so wholesome nourishment to be had (but alas, it breeds nothing but diseases) out of these boasted feasts of love and fables ; yet, methinks, the unalterable continuance of the diet should make us nauseate it : for it is almost impossible to serve up any new dish of that kind. They are all but the cold-meats of the antients, new-heated, and new set forth. I do not at all wonder that the old poets made some rich crops out of these grounds ; the heart of the soil was not then wrought out with continual tillage : but what can we expect now, who come a gleaning, not after the first reapers, but after the very beggars ? Besides, though those mad stories of the gods and heroes seem in themselves so ridiculous ; yet they were then the whole

body (or rather chaos) of the theology of those times. They were believed by all but a few philosophers, and perhaps some atheists, and served to good purpose among the vulgar (as pitiful things as they are), in strengthening the authority of law with the terrors of conscience, and expectation of certain rewards, and unavoidable punishments. There was no other religion; and therefore that was better than none at all. But to us, who have no need of them, to us, who deride their folly, and are wearied with their impertinencies; they ought to appear no better arguments for verse, than those of their worthy successors, the knights errant. What can we imagine more proper for the ornaments of wit or learning in the story of DEUCALION than in that of NOAH? Why will not the actions of SAMPSON afford as plentiful matter as the labours of HERCULES? Why is not JEPHTHA's daughter as good a woman as IPHIGENIA? and the friendship of DAVID and JONATHAN more worthy celebration

bration than that of THESEUS and PERITHOUS? Does not the passage of MOSES and the Israelites into the Holy Land yield incomparably more poetical variety than the voyages of ULYSSES or ÆNEAS? Are the obsolete thread-bare tales of Thebes and Troy half so stored with great, heroic and supernatural actions (since verse will needs find or make such) as the wars of JOSHUA, of the Judges, of DAVID, and divers others? Can all the transformations of the gods give such copious hints to flourish, and expatiate on, as the true miracles of Christ, or of his prophets and apostles? What do I instance in these few particulars? All the books of the Bible are either already most admirable and exalted pieces of poesy, or are the best materials in the world for it. Yet, though they be in themselves so proper to be made use of for this purpose; none but a good artist will know how to do it: neither must we think to cut and polish diamonds with so little pains and skill as we do marble.

For, if any man design to compose a sacred poem, by only turning a story of the scripture, like Mr. QUARLES's, or some other godly matter, like Mr. HEYWOOD of angels, into rhyme; he is so far from elevating of poesy, that he only abases divinity. In brief, he who can write a prophane poem well, may write a divine one better; but he who can do that but ill, will do this much worse. The same fertility of invention; the same wisdom of disposition; the same judgement in observance of decencies; the same lustre and vigor of elocution; the same modesty and majesty of number; briefly, the same kind of habit, is required to both: only this latter allows better stuff, and therefore would look more deformedly, ill drest in it. I am far from assuming to myself to have fulfilled the duty of this weighty undertaking: but sure I am, there is nothing yet in our language (nor perhaps in any) that is in any degree answerable to the idea that

I con-

I conceive of it. And I shall be ambitious of no other fruit from this weak and imperfect attempt of mine, but the opening of a way to the courage and industry of some other persons, who may be better able to perform it thoroughly and successfully.

THE

[91]

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

T O

THE CUTTER OF COLEMAN-STREET [a].

A COMEDY, called the Guardian, and made by me when I was very young, was acted formerly at Cambridge, and several times after privately during the troubles, as I am told, with good approbation, as it has been lately too at Dublin. There being many things in it

[a] This comedy has a great deal of merit. The dialogue is easy enough, and many of the scenes pleasant. And, though the conduct of the drama be not that which the best critics have prescribed, I should, perhaps, have inserted the *Cutter of Coleman-street* in the present collection, if, agreeably to the plan and purpose of this publication, I could have found room for so long a work. However, the *Preface* could by no means be omitted, as it serves to let us into the writer's character, and is written, throughout, in his own spirit.

which

which I disliked, and finding myself for some days idle, and alone in the country, I fell upon the changing of it almost wholly, as now it is, and as it was played since at his Royal Highness's theatre under this new name. It met at the first representation with no favourable reception; and I think there was something of faction against it, by the early appearance of some mens disapprobation before they had seen enough of it to build their dislike upon their judgement. Afterwards it got some ground, and found friends as well as adversaries. In which condition I should willingly let it die, if the main imputation under which it suffered had been shot only against my wit or art in these matters, and not directed against the tenderest parts of human reputation, good-nature, good-manners, and piety itself. The first clamour which some malicious persons raised, and made a great noise with, was, that it was a piece intended for abuse and satire against the king's party. Good God!
against

against the king's party? After having served it twenty years, during all the time of their misfortunes and afflictions; I must be a very rash and imprudent person, if I chose out that of their restitution to begin a quarrel with them. I must be too much a madman to be trusted with such an edged tool as comedy. But first, why should either the whole party (as it was once distinguished by that name, which I hope is abolished now by universal loyalty), or any man of virtue or honour in it, believe themselves injured, or at all concerned, by the representation of the faults and follies of a few who in the general division of the nation had crouded in among them? In all mixed numbers (which is the case of parties) nay, in the most entire and continued bodies, there are often some degenerated and corrupted parts, which may be cast away from that, and even cut off from this unity, without any infection of scandal to the remaining body. The church of Rome, with all her arrogance, and her wide pre-

tences

rences of certainty in all truths, and exemption from all errors, does not clap on this enchanted armour of infallibility upon all her particular subjects, nor is offended at the reproof of her greatest doctors. We are not, I hope, become such Puritans ourselves, as to assume the name of the congregation of the spotless. It is hard for any party to be so ill as that no good, impossible to be so good as that no ill, should be found among them. And it has been the perpetual privilege of satire and comedy, to pluck their vices and follies, though not their persons, out of the sanctuary of any title. A cowardly ranting soldier, an ignorant charlatanical doctor, a foolish cheating lawyer, a silly pedantical scholar, have always been, and still are, the principal subjects of all comedies, without any scandal given to those honourable professions, or even taken by their severest professors. And, if any good physician or divine should be offended with me here for inveighing against a quack, or for finding Deacon Soaker

Soaker too often in the butteries, my respect and reverence to their callings would make me troubled at their displeasure, but I could not abstain from taking them for very choleric and quarrelsome persons. What does this therefore amount to, if it were true which is objected? But it is far from being so; for the representation of two sharks about the town (fellows merry and ingenious enough, and therefore admitted into better companies than they deserve, yet withal two very scoundrels, which is no unfrequent character at London), the representation, I say, of these as pretended officers of the royal army, was made for no other purpose but to show the world, that the vices and extravagances imputed vulgarly to the cavaliers, were really committed by aliens, who only usurped that name, and endeavoured to cover the reproach of their indigency, or infamy of their actions, with so honourable a title. So that the business was not here to correct or cut off any natural branches, though never so corrupted

corrupted or luxuriant, but to separate and cast away that vermin, which, by sticking so close to them, had done great and considerable prejudice both to the beauty and fertility of the tree; and this is plainly said, and as often inculcated, as if one should write round about a sign, *This is a dog, This is a dog*, out of over-much caution lest some might happen to mistake it for a lion. Therefore, when this calumny could not hold (for the case is clear, and will take no colour), some others sought out a subtler hint to traduce me upon the same score, and were angry that the person whom I made a true gentleman, and one both of considerable quality and sufferings in the royal party, should not have a fair and noble character throughout, but should submit in his great extremities to wrong his niece for his own relief. This is a refined exception, such as I little foresaw, nor should, with the dulness of my usual charity, have found out against another man in twenty years. The truth is,

is, I did not intend the character of a hero, one of exemplary virtue, and, as HOMER often terms such men, unblameable, but an ordinary jovial gentleman, commonly called a good-fellow, one not so conscientious as to starve rather than do the least injury, and yet endowed with so much sense of honour, as to refuse, when that necessity was removed, the gain of five thousand pounds, which he might have taken from his niece by the rigour of a forfeiture: and let the frankness of this latter generosity so expiate for the former frailty, as may make us not ashamed of his company; for, if his true metal is but equal to his allay, it will not indeed render him one of the finest sort of men, but it will make him current, for aught I know, in any party that ever yet was in the world. If you be to chuse parts for a comedy out of any noble or elevated rank of persons, the most proper for that work are the worst of that kind. Comedy is humble of her nature, and

has always been bred low, so that she knows not how to behave herself with the great and accomplished. She does not pretend to the brisk and bold qualities of wine, but to the stomachal acidity of vinegar, and therefore is best placed among that sort of people which the Romans call, *The lees of ROMULUS*. If I had designed here the celebration of the virtues of our friends, I would have made the scene nobler where I intended to erect their statues. They should have stood in odes, and tragedies, and epic poems (neither have I totally omitted those great testimonies of my esteem of them)—*Sed nunc non erat his locus*, &c.

AND so much for this little spiny objection, which a man cannot see without a magnifying-glass. The next is enough to knock a man down, and accuses me of no less than prophaneness. Prophane, to deride the hypocrisy of those men whose skulls are not yet bare upon the gates since the public

lie and just punishment of it? But there is some imitation of scripture-phrases: God forbid; there is no representation of the true face of scripture, but only of that vizard which these hypocrites (that is, by interpretation, actors with a vizard) draw upon it. Is it prophane to speak of HARRISON'S return to life again, when some of his friends really professed their belief of it, and he himself had been said to promise it? A man may be so imprudently scrupulous as to find prophaneness in any thing, either said or written, by applying it under some similitude or other to some expressions in scripture. This nicety is both vain and endless. But I call God to witness, that, rather than one tittle should remain among all my writings, which, according to my severest judgement, should be found guilty of the crime objected, I would myself burn and extinguish them all together. Nothing is so detestably lewd and wretchless as the derision of things sacred, and would be in me more unpar-

donable than any man else, who have endeavoured to root out the ordinary weeds of poetry, and to plant it almost wholly with divinity. I am so far from allowing any loose or irreverent expressions, in matters of that religion which I believe, that I am very tender in this point, even for the grossest errors of conscientious persons; they are the properest object (methinks) both of our pity and charity too; they are the innocent and white sectaries, in comparison of another kind, who engraft pride upon ignorance, tyranny upon liberty, and upon all their heresies, treason and rebellion. These are principles so destructive to the peace and society of mankind, that they deserve to be pursued by our serious hatred; and the putting a mask of sanctity upon such devils, is so ridiculous, that it ought to be exposed to contempt and laughter. They are indeed prophane, who counterfeit the softness of the voice of holiness, to disguise the roughness of the hands of impiety; and

and not they, who, with reverence to the thing which others dissemble, deride nothing but their dissimulation. If some piece of an admirable artist should be ill copied, even to ridiculousness, by an ignorant hand; and another painter should undertake to draw that copy, and make it yet more ridiculous, to shew apparently the difference of the two works, and deformity of the latter; will not every man see plainly, that the abuse is intended to the foolish imitation, and not to the excellent original? I might say much more, to confute and confound this very false and malicious accusation; but this is enough, I hope, to clear the matter, and is, I am afraid, too much for a preface to a work of so little consideration.

As for all other objections, which have been, or may be made against the invention or elocution, or any thing else which comes under the critical jurisdiction; let it stand or fall as it can answer for itself, for I do

not lay the great stress of my reputation upon a structure of this nature, much less upon the slight reparations only of an old and unfashionable building. There is no writer but may fail sometimes in point of wit; and it is no less frequent for the auditors to fail in point of judgement. I perceive plainly, by daily experience, that Fortune is mistress of the theatre, as TULLY says it is of all popular assemblies. No man can tell sometimes from whence the invisible winds rise that move them. There are a multitude of people, who are truly and only spectators at a play, without any use of their understanding; and these carry it sometimes by the strength of their numbers. There are others, who use their understandings too much; who think it a sign of weakness and stupidity, to let any thing pass by them unattacked, and that the honour of their judgements (as some brutals imagine of their courage) consists in quarrelling with every thing. We are therefore wonderful wise men, and have
a fine

a fine business of it, we, who spend our time in poetry : I do sometimes laugh, and am often angry with myself, when I think on it ; and if I had a son inclined by nature to the same folly, I believe I should bind him from it, by the strictest conjurations of a paternal blessing. For what can be more ridiculous, than to labour to give men delight, whilst they labour, on their part, more earnestly, to take offence ? To expose one's self voluntarily and frankly to all the dangers of that narrow passage to unprofitable fame, which is defended by rude multitudes of the ignorant, and by armed troops of the malicious ? If we do ill, many discover it, and all despise us ; if we do well, but few men find it out, and fewer entertain it kindly. If we commit errors, there is no pardon ; if we could do wonders, there would be but little thanks, and that too extorted from unwilling givers.

BUT some perhaps may say, Was it not always thus ? do you expect a particular

ticular privilege, that was never yet enjoyed by any poet? were the ancient Græcian, or noble Roman authors, was VIRGIL himself, exempt from this possibility,

Qui multis melior, quam tu, fuit, improbe, rebus,
 who was, in many things, thy better
 far, thou impudent pretender? as was
 said by LUCRETIVS to a person, who
 took it ill that he was to die, though he
 had seen so many do it before him,
 who better deserved immortality: and this
 is to repine at the natural condition of a
 living poet, as he did at that of a living
 mortal. I do not only acknowledge the
 pre-eminence of VIRGIL (whose footsteps
 I adore), but submit to many of his Roman
 brethren; and I confess, that even they,
 in their own times, were not so secure
 from the assaults of detraction (though
 HORACE brags at last, *Jam dente minus
 mordeor invido*); but then the barkings of
 a few were drowned in the applause of all
 the

the rest of the world, and the poison of their bitings extinguished by the antidote of great rewards and great encouragements, which is a way of curing now out of use; and I really profess, that I neither expect, nor think I deserve it. Indolency would serve my turn instead of pleasure; but the case is not so well; for though I comfort myself with some assurance of the favour and affection of very many candid and good-natured (and yet too judicious and even critical) persons; yet this I do affirm, that from all which I have written I never received the least benefit, or the least advantage, but, on the contrary, have felt sometimes the effects of malice and misfortune.

the self of the world, and the power of
 their things reimagined by the author
 of great rewards and great encourage-
 ments, which is a way of coming now out
 of this, and I really protest, that I never
 expect, nor think I desire, to indulge
 would have my own kind of pleasure;
 but the call is not a will, for though I
 comfort myself with some assurance of the
 reward and affection of very many candid
 and good-hearted, and yet too judicious
 and even critical persons; yet this I do
 affirm, that from all which I have writ-
 ten I never received the least benefit, or
 the least advantage, but, on the contrary,
 have felt throughout the efforts of anxiety
 and mortification.

P O E M S
O F
M R. A. C O W L E Y.



I.

THE M O T T O.

Tentanda via est, &c. VIRG.

W H A T shall I do to be for ever known,
And make the age to come my own?

[a]

Hence all the flattering vanities, that lay
Nets of roses in the way.

Hence the desire of honours, or estate;

And all, that is not above fate.

Hence love himself, that tyrant of my days,

Which intercepts my coming praise.

[a] Some lines of the original are left out.

Come,

Come, my best friends, my books, and lead me on;
'Tis time that I were gone.

Welcome, great Stagirite, and teach me now
All I was born to know.

Thy scholar's vict'ries thou dost far out-do :

He conquer'd th' earth ; the whole world, you [b].
Welcome, learn'd Cicero, whose blest tongue and wit
Preserves Rome's greatness yet.

Thou art the first of orators ; only he,
Who best can praise thee, next must be [c].

Welcome the Mantuan swan, Virgil the wise,
Whose verse walks highest, but not flies [d].

[b] *He conquered th' earth ; the whole world, you.*] *Earth*, means this habitable globe: *world*, the system of universal nature. But the compliment is not a little extravagant ! like that of Mr. Pope to Newton —

“ God said, Let Newton be, and *all* was light”

— for which the Poet is very justly reprehended by his learned Commentator.

[c] — *only he*,
Who best can praise thee, next must be.] i. e. he must be *only* next ; for none but Cicero himself was equal to the subject. The poet glances at what Livy said of the great Roman orator — *vir magnus, acer, memorabilis, et in cujus laudēs sequendas Cicerone laudatore opus fuerit*. A fragment, preserved by the elder Seneca.

[d] *Whose verse walks highest, but not flies.*] i. e. which keeps within the limits of nature, and is sublime without
Who

Who brought green poesy to her perfect age;
 And made that art, which was a rage.
 Tell me, ye mighty three, what shall I do
 To be like one of you.
 But ye have climb'd the mountain's top, there sit
 On the calm flourishing head of it,
 And, whilst with wearied steps we upward go,
 See us, and clouds below.



II.

O D E.

O N W I T.

I.

TELL me, O tell, what kind of thing is wit,
 Thou, who master art of it.

being extravagant. Virgil's *epic* Muse is here justly characterized: the *Lyric*, is a swan of another species, of which the poet says nobly, elsewhere —

“Lo, how th' obsequious wind and swelling air

“The Theban swan does upwards bear

“Into the walks of clouds, where he does play,

“And with extended wings opens his liquid way.”

Pindaric Odes. *The praise of Pindar.*

For

For the first matter loves variety less;
 Less women love't, either in love or dress [e].

A thousand different shapes it bears,
 Comely in thousand shapes appears.
 Yonder we saw it plain; and here 'tis now,
 Like spirits in a place, we know not how.

2.

London, that vents of false ware so much store,

In no ware deceives us more.
 For men led by the colour, and the shape,
 Like Zeuxes' birds fly to the painted grape;

Some things do through our judgement pass,
 As through a multiplying glass.
 And sometimes, if the object be too far,
 We take a falling meteor for a star.

3.

Hence 'tis, a wit, that greatest word of fame,
 Grows such a common name.

[e] We should now say, to avoid the disagreeable contraction,—

“Less women love *it*, or in love, or dress.”

—But our poet *affected* these contractions, and, if we may believe the writer of his life, fancied they gave a strength and energy to his verse. The truer reason for his use of them, was, that he found them in fashion.

And

And wits by our creation they become,
Just so, as titular bishops made at Rome.

'Tis not a tale, 'tis not a jest

Admir'd with laughter at a feast,
Nor florid talk, which can that title gain;
The proofs of wit for ever must remain.

4.

'Tis not to force some lifeless verses meet

With their five gouty feet.

All every where, like man's, must be the soul,
And reason the inferior powers controul.

Such were the numbers, which could call

The stones into the Theban wall.

Such miracles are ceas'd; and now we see

No towns or houses [*f*] rais'd by poetry.

5.

Yet, 'tis not to adorn, and gild each part;

That shows more cost, than art.

Jewels at nose and lips but ill appear;

Rather, than all things, wit, let none be there.

Several lights will not be seen,

If there be nothing else between.

[*f*] *Houses*] Here used in the double sense of *houses*,
properly so called, and of *families*.

Men

Men doubt, because they stand so thick i'th' sky,
If those be stars, which paint the galaxy [g].

6.

'Tis not, when two like words make up one noise;

Jests for Dutch-men, and English boys.

In which who finds out wit, the same may see

In anagrams and acrostics, poetry.

Much less can that have any place

At which a virgin hides her face;

Such dross the fire must purge away; 'tis just,

The author blush there, where the reader must.

7.

'Tis not such lines as almost crack the stage,

When Bajazet begins to rage.

[g] This idea has been borrowed by Mr. Addison, and applied, with much elegance, to our poet himself. For, speaking of Mr. Cowley's wit, he says—

“ One glitt'ring thought no sooner strikes our eyes

“ With silent wonder, but new wonders rise:

“ As in the milky way a shining white

“ O'erflows the heav'ns with one continued light;

“ That not a single star can shew his rays,

“ Whilst jointly all promote the common blaze.”

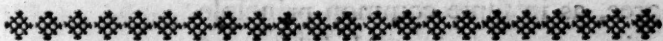
Account of English poets, to Mr. H. S.

Nor

Nor a tall metaphor in the bombast way,
Nor the dry chips of short-lung'd Seneca [b].

Nor upon all things to obtrude
And force some odd similitude.

What is it then, which, like the power divine,
We only can by negatives define [i] ?



III.

TO THE LORD FALKLAND.

For his safe Return from the *Northern Expedition*
against the Scots [k].

GREAT is thy charge, O North ; be wife and just,
England commits her Falkland to thy trust ;

[b] — *short-lung'd Seneca.*] Meaning his *short* sentences, as if he had not breath enough to serve him for longer — *anbelanti similis* — Yet, in another sense, he is, perhaps, the most *long-winded* author of antiquity. For, as Mr. Bayle has well observed, “ Il n’y a guere d’ecrivain dont le verbiage soit plus grand que celui de Seneque : Cicero mettroit “ dans une periode de six lignes ce que Seneque dit dans “ six periodes qui tiennent huit ou neuf lignes.” *Lettres*, t. ii. p. 150.

[i] The two concluding stanzas of this ode are omitted.

[k] *Against the Scots.*] In 1639. Consequently the poet

VOL. I.

I

Return

Return him safe : learning would rather choose
 Her Bodley, or her Vatican, to lose.
 All things, that are but writ or printed there,
 In his unbounded breast engraven are.
 There all the sciences together meet,
 And every art does all her kindred greet,
 Yet juggle not, nor quarrel ; but as well
 Agree, as in some common principle.
 So, in an army govern'd right, we see
 (Though out of several countries rais'd it be)
 That all their order and their place maintain,
 The English, Dutch, the Frenchmen, and the Dane.
 So thousand diverse species fill the air,
 Yet neither croud nor mix confus'dly there ;

was then in his 21st year. But the chief reason for giving these verses to the Lord Falkland a place in the present collection, is, for the sake of perpetuating the memory of the author's *entire friendship* with that virtuous and accomplished nobleman—a *friendship contracted*, as Dr. Sprat tells us, *by the agreement of their learning and manners*.—It is remarkable, that we find no compliment addressed by Mr. Cowley to the duke of Buckingham, or the earl of St. Albans. He supposed, without doubt, that he had done honour enough to those lords (some will think, too much) in permitting them to be his patrons :

“ Enough for half the greatest of those days

“ To 'scape his censure, not expect his praise.”

Pope.

Beasts,

Beasts, houses, trees, and men together lye,
Yet enter undisturb'd into the eye.

And this great prince of knowledge is by fate
Thrust into th' noise and business of a state.

All virtues, and some customs, of the court,
Other mens labour, are at least his sport,
Whilst we, who can no action undertake,
Whom idleness itself might learned make,
Who hear of nothing, and as yet scarce know,
Whether the Scots in England be or no,
Pace dully on, oft tire, and often stay,
Yet see his nimble Pegasus fly away.

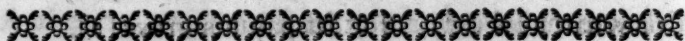
'Tis nature's fault, who did thus partial grow,
And her estate of wit on one bestow :
Whilst we, like younger brothers, get at best
But a small stock, and must work out the rest.
How could he answer't, should the state think fit
To question a monopoly of wit [l] ?

Such is the man, whom we require the same
We lent the North ; untoucht, as is his fame.
He is too good for war, and ought to be
As far from danger, as from fear he's free [m].

[l] — *question a monopoly of wit ?* As it had done many other monopolies. The allusion is not so far fetched, as it seems.

[m] — *as from fear he's free.* Yet it was, in part, to vindicate himself from the *imputation* of this fear, that he

Those men alone (and those are useful, too)
 Whose valour is the only art, they know,
 Were for sad war and bloody battles born;
 Let them the state defend, and he adorn.



IV.

On the Death of Mr. JORDAN,

Second Master at Westminster-School.

HERE lies the master of my tender years,
 The guardian of my parent's [*n*] hope and fears,
 Whose government ne'er stood me in a tear;
 All weeping was reserv'd to spend it here.
 He pluckt from youth the follies and the crimes,
 And built up men against the future times;
 For deeds of age are in their causes then,
 And though he taught but boys, he made the men.
 Hence 'twas, a master, in those ancient days
 When men sought knowledge first, and by it praise,
 always put himself in the way of *danger*, and, in the end,
 threw away his valuable life at the battle of Newbury.

[*n*] — *my parent's*] That is, of his *mother's*, under whose
 discipline he was bred; for he was *born* (Dr. Sprat tells
 us) *after his father's death*.

Was

Was a thing full of reverence, profit, fame;
 Father itself was but a second name.
 And if a Muse hereafter smile on me,
 And say, "Be thou a poet," men shall see
 That none could a more grateful scholar have;
 For what I ow'd his life, I'll pay his grave[o].



V.

On the Death of Mr. WILLIAM HERVEY [p].

Immodicis brevis est ætas, & rara senectus. MART.

I.

IT was a dismal, and a fearful night,
 Scarce could the morn drive on th'unwilling light,
 When sleep, death's image, left my troubled breast,
 By something, liker death, possest.

[o] The rest of this poem (one of those which were written, as he says, *when he was very young*) is suppressed.

[p] *Mr. William Hervey.*] The author's beloved friend.—This poem came from the heart, and is therefore more natural and pleasing than most others in the collection.

My eyes with tears did uncommanded flow,
 And on my soul hung the dull weight
 Of some intolerable fate.
 What bell was that? Ah me! too much I know.

2.

My sweet companion, and my gentle peer,
 Why hast thou left me thus unkindly here,
 Thy end for ever, and my life to moan;
 O thou hast left me all alone!
 Thy soul and body, when death's agony
 Besieg'd, around, thy noble heart,
 Did not with more reluctance part,
 Than I, my dearest friend, do part from thee.

3.

My dearest friend, would I had dy'd for thee [q]!
 Life and this world henceforth will tedious be.
 Nor shall I know hereafter what to do,
 If once my griefs prove tedious, too.
 Silent and sad I walk about all day,
 As sullen ghosts stalk speechless by,
 Where their hid treasures lye;
 Alas, my treasure's gone, why do I stay?

[q] — *would I had dy'd for thee!* From 2 Sam. xviii.

4.

He was my friend, the truest friend on earth;
 A strong and mighty influence join'd our birth[r].
 Nor did we envy the most sounding name
 By friendship giv'n of old to fame.
 None but his brethren he, and sisters knew,
 Whom the kind youth preferr'd to me;
 And ev'n in that we did agree,
 For much above myself I lov'd them, too.

5.

Say, for you saw us, ye immortal lights,
 How oft unweary'd have we spent the nights?
 Till the Ledaean stars, so fam'd for love,
 Wonder'd at us from above.
 We spent them not in toys, in lusts, or wine;
 But search of deep philosophy,
 Wit, eloquence, and poetry,
 Arts which I lov'd, for they, my friend, were thine.

6.

Ye fields of Cambridge, our dear Cambridge, say,
 Have ye not seen us walking every day?

[r] — *join'd our birth.*] In this and the following stanza the poet has copied Persius, Sat. v. but with freedom and spirit.

Was there a tree about, which did not know
 The love betwixt us two?
 Henceforth, ye gentle trees, for ever fade;
 Or your sad branches thicker join,
 And into darksome shades combine,
 Dark, as the grave, wherein my friend is laid.

7.

Henceforth, no learned youths beneath you sing,
 Till all the tuneful birds to' your boughs they bring;
 No tuneful birds play with their wonted cheer,
 And call the learned youths to hear;
 No whistling winds through the glad branches fly,
 But all with sad solemnity,
 Mute and unmoved be,
 Mute, as the grave, wherein my friend does lye.

8.

To him my Muse made haste with every strain,
 Whilst it was new, and warm yet from the brain.
 He lov'd my worthless rhimes, and, like a friend [s],
 Would find out something to commend.

[s] — *like a friend*

— “each finding, like a friend,
 “Something to blame, and something to commend.”

Pope, to Mr. Jervas.

Hence

Hence now, my Muse, thou canst not me delight;
 Be this my latest verse
 With which I now adorn his hearse,
 And this my grief, without thy help, shall write.

9.

Had I wreath of bays about my brow,
 I should condemn that flourishing honour now,
 Condemn it to the fire, and joy to hear
 It rage and crackle there.
 Instead of bays, crown with sad cypress me;
 Cypress, which tombs does beautify;
 Not Phoebus griev'd, so much as I,
 For him, who first was made that mournful tree.

10.

Large was his soul [1]; as large a soul, as e'er
 Submitted to inform a body here.
 High as the place, 'twas shortly in heav'n to have,
 But low, and humble as his grave.
 So high, that all the virtues there did come
 As to their chiefest seat
 Conspicuous, and great;
 So low, that for me too it made a room.

[1] Mr. Gray seems to have had his eye on this line,
 when he wrote that verse, in his *Epitaph* —

“Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere.”

11. He

11.

He scorn'd this busy world below, and all
 That we, mistaken mortals, pleasure call;
 Was fill'd with innocent gallantry and truth,
 Triumphant o'er the sins of youth.
 He, like the stars, to which he now is gone,
 That shine with beams like flame,
 Yet burn not with the same,
 Had all the light of youth, of the fire none.

12.

Knowledge he only fought, and so soon caught,
 As if for him knowledge had rather fought,
 Nor did more learning ever crowded lie
 In such a short mortality.
 Whene'er the skilful youth discours'd or writ,
 Still did the notions throng
 About his eloquent tongue,
 Nor could his ink flow faster than his wit.

13.

So strong a wit did nature to him frame,
 As all things, but his judgement, overcame;
 His judgement, like the heav'nly moon, did show,
 Temp'ring that mighty sea below.

Oh,

Oh, had he liv'd in learning's world, what bound
 Would have been able to controul
 His over-powering soul?
 We've lost in him arts, that not yet are found [*u*].

14.

His mirth was the pure spirits of various wit,
 Yet never did his God or friends forget.
 And, when deep talk and wisdom came in view,
 Retir'd and gave to them their due.
 For the rich help of books he always took,
 Though his own searching mind before
 Was so with notions written o'er,
 As if wise nature had made that her book.

15.

So many virtues join'd in him, as we
 Can scarce pick here and there in history.
 More than old writers practice e'er could reach,
 As much as they could ever teach.
 These did religion, queen of virtues, sway,
 And all their sacred motions steer,
 Just like the first and highest sphere
 Which wheels about, and turns all heav'n one way.

[*u*] — arts, that not yet are found.]

“And worlds applaud, that must not yet be found.”

Pope, *Ess. on Crit.* ver. 194.

16. With

16.

With as much zeal, devotion, piety,
 He always liv'd, as other saints do die.
 Still with his soul severe account he kept,
 Weeping all debts out, ere he slept.
 Then down in peace and innocence he lay,
 Like the sun's laborious light,
 Which still in water sets at night,
 Unfulfilled with his journey of the day.

17.

Wondrous young man, why wert thou made so good,
 To be snatcht hence, ere better understood?
 Snatcht, before half of thee enough was seen!
 Thou, ripe; and yet thy life, but green!
 Nor could thy friends take their last sad farewell,
 But danger and infectious death
 Maliciously seiz'd on that breath
 Where life, spirit, pleasure, always us'd to dwell.

18.

But happy thou, ta'en from this frantic age,
 Where ignorance and hypocrisy does rage!
 A fitter time for heav'n no soul e'er chose,
 The place now only free from those.

There

There 'mong the blest thou dost for ever shine,
 And wheresoe'er thou casts thy view
 Upon that white and radiant crew,
 See'st not a soul cloath'd with more light than thine.

19.

And, if the glorious saints cease not to know
 Their wretched friends, who fight with life below;
 Thy flame to me does still the same abide,
 Only more pure and rarified.
 There, whilst immortal hymns thou dost rehearse,
 Thou dost with holy pity see
 Our dull and earthly poesy,
 Where grief and misery can be join'd with verse [w].

[w] *Where grief and misery can be join'd with verse.*
 Rightly made the distinction of *earthly poesy*; for the *heavenly* (if we suppose poetry to have any place there) can only be employed on themes of *joy and happiness*.—But the poet had a further meaning in this fine line, to insinuate the preposterous levity and vanity of *earthly poets*, who can afford to be *witty* even on their own *miseries*. This censure, falling first upon himself, has the more grace.



VI.

Imitation of MARTIAL [x], Lib. v. Ep. 21.

- " SI tecum mihi, care Martialis,
 " Securis liceat frui diebus ;
 " Si disponere tempus otiosum,
 " Et veræ pariter vacare vitæ :
 " Nec nos atria, nec domos potentum,
 " Nec lites tetricas, forumque triste
 " Noffemus, nec imagines superbas :
 " Sed gestatio, fabulæ, libelli,
 " Campus, porticus, umbra, virgo, thermæ ;
 " Hæc essent loca semper, hi labores.
 " Nunc vivit sibi neuter, heu, bonoque
 " Soles effugere atque abire sentit ;
 " Qui nobis pereunt, & imputantur.
 " Quisquam vivere cum sciat, moratur ?"

IF, dearest friend, it my good fate might be
T' enjoy at once a quiet life and thee ;
 If we for happiness could leisure find,
 And wandering time into a method bind,
 We should not sure the great man's favour need,
 Nor on long hopes, the court's thin diet, feed.
 We should not patience find daily to hear
 The calumnies, and flatteries, spoken there.

[x] Ed. Mattaire, Lond. 1716.

We

We should not a lord's table humbly use,
Or talk, in ladies chambers, love and news;
But books, and wise discourse, gardens and fields,
And all the joys, that unmixt nature yields.
Thick summer shades, where winter still does lye;
Bright winter fires, that summer's part supply.
Sleep, not controll'd by cares, confin'd to night,
Or bound in any rule, but appetite.
Free, but not savage or ungracious mirth;
Rich wines, to give it quick and easy birth.
A few companions, which ourselves should chuse,
A gentle mistress, and a gentler Muse.
Such, dearest friend, such, without doubt, should be
Our place, our business, and our company.
Now to himself, alas, does neither live,
But sees good funs, of which we are to give
A strict account, set and march thick away;
Knows a man how to live, and does he stay?



VII.

THE CHRONICLE.

A BALLAD[y].

1.

MARGARITA first possess'd,
 If I remember well, my breast,
 Margarita, first of all;
 But, when a while the wanton maid
 With my restless heart had play'd,
 Martha took the flying ball.

2.

Martha soon did it resign
 To the beauteous Catharine.
 Beauteous Catharine gave place
 (Though loth and angry she to part
 With the possession of my heart)
 To Elifa's conquering face.

[y] This agreeable Ballad has had justice done to it.
 Nothing is more famous, even in our days, than Cowley's
mistresses.

3. Elifa

Eliza till this hour might reign,
 Had she not evil counsels ta'en;
 Fundamental laws she broke,
 And still new favorites she chose,
 Till up in arms my passions rose,
 And cast away her yoke.

4.
 Mary then and gentle Anne
 Both to reign at once began;
 Alternately they sway'd:
 And sometimes Mary was the fair,
 And sometimes Anne the crown did wear,
 And sometimes both P obey'd.

5.
 Another Mary then arose,
 And did rigorous laws impose:
 A mighty tyrant, she!
 Long, alas, should I have been
 Under that iron-scepter'd queen,
 Had not Rebecca set me free.

6.
 When fair Rebecca set me free,
 'Twas then a golden time with me;

But soon those pleasures fled :
 For the gracious princess dy'd
 In her youth and beauty's pride,
 And Judith reigned in her stead.

7.

One month, three days, and half an hour,
 Judith held the sovereign power :
 Wondrous beautiful her face ;
 But so weak and small her wit,
 That she to govern was unfit,
 And so Susanna took her place.

8.

But, when Isabella came,
 Arm'd with a resifless flame,
 And th' artillery of her eye ;
 Whilst she proudly march'd about
 Greater conquests to find out,
 She beat out Susan by the bye.

9.

But in her place I then obey'd
 Black-ey'd Bess, her viceroyn-maid,
 To whom ensu'd a vacancy.
 Thousand worse passions then possess'd
 The interregnum of my breast :
 Bless me from such an anarchy !

10. Gentle

10.

Gentle Henrietta than [z],

And a third Mary next began;

Then Joan, and Jane, and Audria,

And then a pretty Thomazine,

And then another Katharine,

And then a long *et cetera*.

11.

But should I now to you relate,

The strength and riches of their state,

The powder, patches, and the pins,

The ribbands, jewels, and the rings,

The lace, the paint, and warlike things,

That make up all their magazines;

12.

If I should tell the politic arts

To take and keep mens hearts;

[z] — *than*] So spelt (as many other words in these poems are) for the sake of the rhyme. He had learned this art, or licence rather, from Spenser, who practised it very frequently. But he might have learned better things from our old poet, if this early favourite of his youth had been taken for the model of his riper age.

The letters, embassies, and spies,
 The frowns, and smiles, and flatteries,
 The quarrels, tears, and perjuries,
 Numberless, nameless mysteries!

And all the little lime-twigs laid
 By Machiavel, the waiting-maid;
 I more voluminous should grow
 (Chiefly, if I like them, should tell
 All change of weathers [a] that befall)
 Than Holinshed or Stow.

But I will briefer with them be,
 Since few of them were long with me,
 An higher and a nobler strain
 My present emperess does claim,
 Heleonora, first o'th' name;
 Whom God grant long to reign!

[a] — *change of weathers*]. His brilliant wit, for once
 is well placed.

VIII.

On the Death of Sir ANTHONY VANDIKE,
the famous Painter.

VANDIKE is dead; but what bold Muse shall
dare

(Though poets in that word [b] with painters share)
T' express her sadness? Poesy must become
An art, like painting here, an art, that's dumb.
Let's all our solemn grief in silence keep,
Like some sad picture, which he made to weep,
Or those who saw't; for none his works could view
Unmov'd with the same passions, which he drew.
His pieces so with their live objects strive,
That both, or pictures seem, or both alive.
Nature herself, amaz'd, does doubting stand,
Which is her own, and which the painter's hand,
And does attempt the like with less success,
When her own work in twins she would express.
His all-resembling pencil did out-pass
The mimic imagery of looking-glass.
Nor was his life less perfect, than his art,
Nor was his hand less erring, than his heart [c].

[b] — *in that word*] Namely, *dare*; alluding to Horace,

“ — pictoribus atque poetis

“ *Quidlibet audendi semper fuit æqua potestas.*”

A. P. ver. 11.

[c] — *than his heart.*] A noble eulogy of this ex-

There was no false, or fading colour there,
 The figures sweet and well-proportion'd were.
 Most other men, set next to him in view,
 Appear'd more shadows, than the men he drew.
 Thus still he liv'd, till heaven did for him call,
 Where reverend Luke salutes him first of all :
 Where he beholds new fights, divinely fair ;
 And could almost wish for his pencil there ;
 Did he not gladly see how all things shine,
 Wondrously painted in the mind divine [d],
 Whilst he, for ever ravish'd with the show,
 Scorns his own art, which we admire below.

Only his beauteous lady [e] still he loves ;
 (The love of heavenly objects heaven improves)
 He sees bright angels in pure beams appear,
 And thinks on her he left so like them here.
 And you, fair widow, who stay here alive,
 Since he so much rejoices, cease to grieve.
 Your joys and griefs were wont the same to be ;
 Begin not now, blest pair, to disagree.

traordinary man ! and, if report says true, a very just one.

[d] — *in the mind divine,*] A platonic idea, which Malbranche and our Norris have rendered so famous.

[e] — *his beauteous lady*] A lady, of distinguished quality, as well as beauty, daughter to the Lord Ruthen, Earl of Gowry.

No

No wonder, death mov'd not his generous mind:
 You, and a new-born you, he left behind.
 Even fate express'd his love to his dear wife,
 And let him end your picture with his life.



IX.

TO SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT:

Upon his two first Books of GONDIBERT, finished
 before his Voyage to America.

MEthinks, heroic poesy, till now,
 Like some fantastic fairy-land, did shew;
 Gods, devils, nymphs, witches, and gyants race,
 And all, but man, in man's chief work had place.
 Thou, like some worthy knight, with sacred arms
 Dost drive the monsters thence, and end the charms;
 Instead of those, dost men and manners plant,
 The things, which that rich soil did chiefly want.
 Yet even thy mortals do their gods excell,
 Taught by thy Muse to fight and love so well.

By fatal hands whilst present empires fall,
 Thine from the grave past monarchies recall.
 So much more thanks from human kind does merit
 The poet's fury, than the zealot's spirit.
 And from the grave thou mak'st this empire rise,
 Not, like some dreadful ghost, t'affright our eyes,

But with more lustre and triumphant state,
 Than when it crown'd at proud Verona sate.
 So will our God rebuild man's perish'd frame,
 And raise him up much better, yet the same [f]:
 So god-like poets do past things rehearse,
 Not change, but heighten, nature by their verse.

With shame, methinks, great Italy must see
 Her conquerors rais'd to life again by thee.
 Rais'd by such powerful verse, that ancient Rome
 May blush no less to see her wit o'ercome.
 Some men their fancies, like their faith, derive [g],
 And think all ill but that, which Rome does give.
 The marks of old and catholic would find,
 To the same chair would truth and fiction bind.
 Thou in those beaten paths disdain'st to tread,
 And scorn'st to live by robbing of the dead.

[f] *So will—yet the same.*] It is pleasant to see how the wits catch their ideas from each other. Mr. Pope, in a letter of compliment to a friend, who had done much honour to his *Essay on Man*, expresses himself in these words—"It is indeed the same system as mine, but illustrated with a ray of your own; as they say our natural body is the same still, when it is glorified." Works, vol. ix. Letter xcvi.

[g] *Some men their fancies, like their faith, derive,*
 "Thus wit, like faith, by each man is apply'd
 To one small sect, and all are damn'd beside."

Essay on Crit. ver. 396.

Since

Since time does all things change, thou think'st
not fit

This latter age should see all new, but wit.
Thy fancy, like a flame, its way does make,
And leave bright tracks for following pens to take.
Sure 'twas this noble boldness of the Muse
Did thy desire to seek new worlds [b] infuse,
And ne'er did heav'n so much a voyage bless,
If thou canst plant but there, with like success.

X

On the Death of Mr. CRASHAW.

POET and Saint! to thee alone are given

The two most sacred names of earth and heaven;
The hard and rarest union, which can be,
Next that of Godhead with humanity.
Long did the Muses, banish'd slaves abide,
And built vain pyramids to mortal pride;
Like Moses thou (though spells and charms with-
stand)

Hast brought them nobly home back to their Holy
Land.

[b] — *new worlds*] This alludes to Sir William's project of a settlement at Virginia, which, however, had no better success than the poetical project, which his friend here celebrates.

Ah

Ah wretched we, poets of earth ! but thou
 Wert, living, the same poet, which thou'rt now.
 Whilst angels sing to thee their airs divine,
 And joy in an applause so great as thine,
 Equal society with them to hold,
 Thou need'st not make new songs, but say the old.
 And they (kind spirits !) shall all rejoice to see
 How little less than they, exalted man may be.
 Still the old heathen gods in numbers dwell,
 The heavenliest thing on earth still keeps up hell.
 Nor have we yet quite purg'd the Christian land ;
 Still idols here, like calves at Bethel, stand.
 And though Pan's death [i] long since all oracles
 broke,
 Yet still in rhyme the fiend Apollo spoke :
 Nay with the worst of heathen dotage we
 (Vain men !) the monster woman deify ;
 Find stars, and tie our fates there, in a face,
 And Paradise in them, by whom we lost it, place.
 What different faults corrupt our Muses thus !
 Wanton as girls, as old wives, fabulous !

[i] — *Pan's death*] Alluding to the famous story in
 Plutarch's Dialogue concerning the silence of the pagan ora-
 cles, and the use made of that story by Eusebius and
 others ; whence it became the general opinion of the
 learned, in our author's days, that, by the death of the
 GREAT PAN, was meant the crucifixion of our Saviour.

Thy

Thy spotless Muse, like Mary, did contain
 The boundless Godhead; she did well disdain
 That her eternal verse employ'd should be
 On a less subject than eternity;
 And for a sacred mistress scorn'd to take,
 But her, whom God himself scorn'd not his spouse
 To make.

It (in a kind) her miracle did do;
 A fruitful mother was, and virgin too.

How well (blest swan) did fate contrive thy
 death [k];

And made thee render up thy tuneful breath
 In thy great mistress' arms! thou most divine
 And richest offering of Loretto's shrine!
 Where, like some holy sacrifice, t'expire,
 A fever burns thee, and love lights the fire.
 Angels (they say) brought the fam'd chapel there,
 And bore the sacred load in triumph through the air.
 'Tis surer much, they brought thee there; and they,
 And thou, their charge, went singing all the way.

Pardon, my mother church, if I consent
 That angels led him, when from thee he went;
 For even in error sure no danger is,
 When join'd with so much piety as his.

[k] Mr. Craslaw died of a fever at Loretto, being
 newly chosen canon of that church. COWLEY.

Ah,

Ah, mighty God, with shame I speak't, and grief,
 Ah that our greatest faults were in belief!
 And our weak reason were ev'n weaker yet,
 Rather than thus our wills too strong for it.
 His faith, perhaps, in some nice tenets might
 Be wrong; his life, I'm sure, was in the right [1].
 And I myself a catholic will be,
 So far at least, great saint, to pray to thee.

Hail, bard triumphant [m]! and some care bestow
 On us, the poets militant below!
 Oppos'd by our old enemy, adverse chance,
 Attack'd by envy, and by ignorance,
 Enchain'd by beauty, tortur'd by desires,
 Expos'd by tyrant-love to savage beasts and fires,
 Thou from low earth in nobler flames didst rise,
 And, like Elijah, mount alive the skies.

[1] Hence the famous lines of Mr. Pope, which have given such scandal to some, and triumph to others, only because both parties have been more in haste to apply than understand them—

“For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,

“His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.”

[m] *Hail, bard triumphant!* Hence the apostrophe of Mr. Pope, but not so happily applied, as here—

“Hail, bards triumphant, born in happier days!”

Essay on Crit. ver. 189.

Elisha-

M R. A. COWLEY.

Elifha-like (but with a wish much less,
More fit thy greatness, and my littleness)
Lo here I beg (I whom thou once didst prove
So humble to esteem, so good to love)
Not that thy spirit might on me doubled be,
I ask but half thy mighty spirit for me.
And, when my Muse soars with so strong a wing,
'Twill learn of things divine, and first of thee, to
sing.



ANA-

XI.

ANACREONTICS[ⁿ].

OR,

Some Copies of Verses translated Paraphrastically out of ANACREON.

I.

LOVE.

I'LL sing of heroes, and of kings;
 In mighty numbers, mighty things.
 Begin, my Muse; but lo, the strings
 To my great song rebellious prove;
 The strings will sound of nought, but love.
 I broke them all, and put on new;
 'Tis this, or nothing sure, will do.
 These sure (said I) will me obey;
 These sure heroic notes will play.
 Straight I began with thundering Jove,
 And all th' immortal pow'rs, but love.

[ⁿ] These *Anacreontics* shew, that the author wanted neither ease of expression, nor the grace of numbers, when he followed the bent of his own taste and genius.

Love

Love smil'd, and from my enfeebled lyre
 Came gentle airs, such as inspire
 Melting love, and soft desire.
 Farewel, then, heroes, farewel kings,
 And mighty numbers, mighty things;
 Love tunes my heart just to my strings.

II.

D R I N K I N G.

T H E thirsty earth soaks up the rain,
 And drinks, and gapes for drink again.
 The plants suck in the earth, and are,
 With constant drinking, fresh and fair.
 The sea itself, which, one would think,
 Should have but little need of drink,
 Drinks ten thousand rivers up,
 So fill'd, that they o'erflow the cup.
 The busy sun (and one would guess,
 By's drunken fiery face, no less)
 Drinks up the sea, and, when he's done,
 The moon and stars drink up the sun.
 They drink and dance by their own light,
 They drink and revel all the night.
 Nothing in nature's sober found,
 But an eternal health goes round.

Fill

Fill up the bowl then, fill it high,
 Fill all the glasses there: for why
 Should every creature drink, but I,
 Why, man of morals, tell me why?

III.

BEAUTY.

LIBERAL nature did dispense
 To all things arms for their defence;
 And some she arms with sinewy force,
 And some, with swiftness in the course;
 Some, with hard hoofs, or forked claws,
 And some, with horns, or tusked jaws;
 And some with scales, and some with wings,
 And some with teeth, and some with stings.
 Wisdom to man she did afford,
 Wisdom for shield, and wit for sword.
 What to beauteous woman-kind,
 What arms, what armour, has she assign'd?
 Beauty is both; for with the fair
 What arms, what armour, can compare?
 What steel, what gold, or diamond,
 More impassible is found?
 And yet what flame, what lightning, e'er
 So great an active force did bear?

They

They are all weapon, and they dart,
 Like porcupines, from every part.
 Who can, alas, their strength exprefs,
 Arm'd, when they themselves undrefs,
 Cap-a-pee with nakedness?

IV.

THE DUEL.

YES, I will love then, I will love,
 I will not now love's rebel prove,
 Though I was once his enemy;
 Though, ill-advis'd and stubborn, I
 Did to the combat him defy,
 An helmet, spear, and mighty shield,
 Like some new Ajax, I did wield.
 Love in one hand his bow did take,
 In th' other hand a dart did shake.
 But yet in vain the dart did throw,
 In vain he often drew the bow.
 So well my armour did resist,
 So oft by flight the blow I miss'd.
 But when I thought all danger past,
 His quiver emptied quite at last,
 Instead of arrow, or of dart,
 He shot himself into my heart.

The living and the killing arrow
Ran through the skin, the flesh, the blood,
And broke the bones, and scorch'd the marrow,
No trench or work of life withstood.
In vain I now the walls maintain,
I set out guards and scouts in vain,
Since th' enemy does within remain.
In vain, a breast-plate now I wear,
Since in my breast the foe I bear.
In vain, my feet their swiftness try;
For from the body can they fly?

V.

A G E.

OFT am I by the women told,
Poor Anacreon, thou grow'st old:
Look, how thy hairs are falling all;
Poor Anacreon, how they fall!
Whether I grow old or no,
By th' effects I do not know.
This I know, without being told,
'Tis time to live, if I grow old,
'Tis time short pleasures now to take,
Of little life the best to make,
And manage wisely the last stake.

VI. THE

VI.

THE ACCOUNT.

WHEN all the stars are by thee told,
 (The endless fums of heavenly gold)
 Or, when the hairs are reckon'd all,
 From sickly autumn's head that fall,
 Or, when the drops that make the sea,
 Whilst all her sands thy counters be;
 Thou then, and thou alone, may'st prove
 Th' arithmetician of my love.
 An hundred loves at Athens score,
 At Corinth write an hundred more:
 Fair Corinth does such beauties bear,
 So few is an-escaping there [o].
 Write then at Chios seventy-three;
 Write then at Lesbos (let me see)
 Write me at Lesbos ninety down,
 Full ninety loves, and half a one.
 And next to these let me present
 The fair Ionian regiment.
 And next the Carian company,
 Five hundred both effectively [p].

[o] — *an escaping there.*] A stroke of moral satire, slid in, on that city, so infamous for its brothelery. The poet is sage, even in these mad Anacreontics.

[p] — *effectively.*] The term in use with military men (and therefore humourously affected here) for *completely*.

Three hundred more at Rhodes and Crete;
 Three hundred, 'tis I'm sure, complete;
 For arms at Crete each face does bear,
 And every eye's an archer there.
 Go on; this stop why dost thou make?
 Thou think'st, perhaps, that I mistake.
 Seems this to thee too great a sum?
 Why many thousands are to come;
 The mighty Xerxes could not boast
 Such different nations in his host.
 On; for my love, if thou be'st weary,
 Must find some better secretary.
 I have not yet my Persian told,
 Nor yet my Syrian loves enroll'd,
 Nor Indian, nor Arabian;
 Nor Cyprian loves, nor African;
 Nor Scythian, nor Italian flames;
 There's a whole map behind of names:
 Of gentle loves i'th' temperate zone,
 And cold ones in the frigid zone;
 Cold frozen loves, with which I pine,
 And parched loves, beneath the line.

VII.

G O L D.

A MIGHTY pain to love it is,
 And 'tis a pain that pain to miss.

But

But of all pains the greatest pain
It is to love, but love in vain.
Virtue now, nor noble blood,
Nor wit by love is understood,
Gold alone does passion move,
Gold monopolizes love!
A curse on her, and on the man
Who this traffic first began!
A curse on him who found the ore!
A curse on him who digg'd the store!
A curse on him who did refine it!
A curse on him who first did coin it!
A curse, all curses else above,
On him, who us'd it first in love!
Gold begets in brethren hate,
Gold, in families debate;
Gold, does friendships separate,
Gold, does civil wars create.
These the smallest harms of it!
Gold, alas, does love beget.

VIII.

THE EPICURE.

FILL the bowl with rosy wine,
Around our temples roses twine,

L 3

And

And let us chearfully awhile,
 Like the wine and roses, smile.
 Crown'd with roses, we condemn
 Gyges' wealthy diadem.
 To-day is ours ; what do we fear?
 To-day is ours ; we have it here.
 Let's treat it kindly, that it may
 Wish, at least, with us to stay.
 Let's banish busines, banish sorrow ;
 To the gods, belongs to-morrow.

IX.

A N O T H E R.

UNDERNEATH this myrtle shade,
 On flowery beds supinely laid,
 With odorous oils my head o'er-flowing,
 And around it roses growing,
 What should I do but drink away
 The heat and troubles of the day ?
 In this more than kingly state,
 Love himself shall on me wait.
 Fill to me, love, nay, fill it up ;
 And mingled cast into the cup,
 Wit, and mirth, and noble fires,
 Vigorous health, and gay desires.

The

The wheel of life no less will stay
 In a smooth, than rugged way.
 Since it equally does flee,
 Let the motion pleasant be.
 Why do we precious ointments shower,
 Nobler wines why do we pour,
 Beauteous flowers why do we spread,
 Upon the monuments of the dead?
 Nothing they but dust can show,
 Or bones, that hasten to be so.
 Crown me with roses whilst I live,
 Now your wines and ointments give.
 After death I nothing crave,
 Let me alive my pleasures have;
 All are Stoics in the grave.

X.

THE GRASSHOPPER.

HAPPY insect, what can be,
 In happiness, compar'd to thee?
 Fed with nourishment divine,
 The dewy morning's gentle wine!
 Nature waits upon thee still,
 And thy verdant cup does fill,
 'Tis fill'd, wherever thou dost tread,
 Nature's self's thy Ganymed.

L 4

Thou

Thou dost drink, and dance, and sing;
Happier, than the happiest king!
All the fields, which thou dost see,
All the plants, belong to thee,
All that summer hours produce,
Fertile made with early juice.
Man for thee does sow and plow;
Farmer he, and landlord thou!
Thou dost innocently joy;
Nor does thy luxury destroy;
The shepherd gladly heareth thee,
More harmonious than he.
Thee, country hinds with gladness hear,
Prophet of the ripen'd year!
Thee, Phoebus loves, and does inspire;
Phoebus is himself thy fire.
To thee, of all things upon earth,
Life is no longer than thy mirth.
Happy insect, happy thou
Dost neither age nor winter know.
But, when thou'rt drunk, and danc'd, and sung
Thy fill, the flowery leaves among,
(Voluptuous, and wise, with all,
Epicurean animal!)
Sated with thy summer feast,
Thou retir'st to endless rest.

THE SWALLOW.

FOOLISH prater, what dost thou
So early at my window do,
With thy tuneless serenade?
Well 't had been, had Tereus made
Thee, as dumb, as Philomel;
There his knife had done but well.
In thy undiscover'd nest
Thou dost all the winter rest,
And dreamest o'er thy summer joys,
Free from the stormy season's noise:
Free from th' ill thou'st done to me;
Who disturbs, or seeks out thee?
Hadst thou all the charming notes
Of the wood's poetic throats,
All thy art could never pay
What thou'st ta'en from me away;
Cruel bird, thou'st ta'en away
A dream out of my arms to-day,
A dream, that ne'er must equal'd be
By all that waking eyes may see.
Thou, this damage to repair,
Nothing half so sweet or fair,

Nothing

Nothing half so good can't bring,
Though men say, *Thou bring'st the spring.*

XII.

ELEGY UPON ANACREON,
who was choaked by a GRAPE-STONE.

Spoken by the God of Love.

HOW shall I lament thine end,
My best servant, and my friend?
Nay, and, if from a deity
So much deified as I,
It sound not too profane and odd,
Oh my master, and my god!
For 'tis true, most mighty poet,
(Though I like not, men should know it)
I am in naked nature less,
Less by much, than in thy dress.
All thy verse is softer far
Than the downy feathers are
Of my wings, or of my arrows,
Of my mother's doves, or sparrows.
Sweet, as lovers freshest kisses,
Or, their riper following blisses,

Graceful,

Graceful, cleanly, smooth, and round,
 All with Venus' girdle bound;
 And thy life was all the while
 Kind and gentle, as thy style.
 The smooth-pac'd hours of ev'ry day
 Glided numerously away.

Like thy verse, each hour did pass;
 Sweet and short, like that it was.

Some do but their youth allow me,
 Just what they, by nature, owe me;
 The time, that's mine, and not their own,
 The certain tribute of my crown.
 When they grow old, they grow to be
 Too busy, or too wise, for me.
 Thou wert wiser, and didst know,
 None too wise for love can grow;
 Love was with thy life entwin'd
 Close, as heat with fire is join'd,
 A powerful brand prescrib'd the date
 Of thine, like Meleager's fate.
 Th' antiperistasis [*p*] of age
 More inflam'd thy amorous rage;

[*p*] *Antiperistasis*] This hard word only means, *compression*. The word is used by naturalists to express the power, which one quality has, *by pressing on all sides*, to augment its contrary: as here the *cold*, with which old age is environed, increases heat. He expresses this quaint

Thy

Thy silver hairs yielded me more,
Than even golden curls, before.

Had I the power of creation,
As I have of generation,
Where I the matter must obey,
And cannot work plate out of clay;
My creatures should be all like thee,
'Tis thou should their idea be.

They, like thee, should thoroughly hate
Business, honour, title, state,
Other wealth they should not know,
But what my living mines bestow;
The pomp of kings they should confess
At their crownings to be less
Than a lover's humblest guise,
When at his mistress' feet he lies.
Rumour they no more should mind
Than men safe-landed do, the wind;
Wisdom itself they should not hear,
When it presumes to be severe.
Beauty alone they should admire;
Nor look at fortune's vain attire,

idea more plainly in two verses of THE MISTRESS (left
out in this collection), where he says —

“Flames their most vigorous heat do hold,

“And purest light, if *compass'd round with cold.*”

The Request, St. 3.

Nor

Nor ask what parents it can shew;
With dead, or old, t'has nought to do.
They should not love yet all, or any,
But very much, and very many.
All their life should gilded be
With mirth, and wit, and gaiety,
Well remembering, and applying
The necessity of dying.
Their chearful heads should always wear
All that crowns the flowery year.
They should always laugh, and sing,
And dance, and strike th' harmonious string.
Verse should from their tongue so flow,
As if it in the mouth did grow,
As swiftly answering their command,
As tunes obey the artful hand.
And, whilst I do thus discover
Th' ingredients of a happy lover,
'Tis, my Anacreon, for thy sake
I of the grape no mention make.
Till my Anacreon by thee fell,
Curfed plant, I lov'd thee well.
And 'twas oft my wanton use,
To dip my arrows in thy juice.
Curfed plant, 'tis true, I see,
Th' old report that goes of thee,

That

That with giants blood the earth
 Stain'd and poison'd gave thee birth,
 And now thou wreak'st thy ancient spight
 On men, in whom the gods delight.
 Thy patron Bacchus, 'tis no wonder,
 Was brought forth in flames and thunder,
 In rage, in quarrels, and in fights,
 Worse than his tigers, he delights ;
 In all our heaven I think there be [q]
 No such ill-natur'd god as he.
 Thou pretendest, traiterous wine,
 To be the Muses friend and mine.
 With love and wit thou dost begin,
 False fires, alas, to draw us in,
 Which, if our course we by them keep,
 Misguide to madness, or to sleep.
 Sleep were well ; thou'st learnt a way
 To death itself now to betray.

[q] — *I think there be* “ I think, Crab, my dog *be* the fourest-natured dog that lives.” [*Shakesp. Two Gent. of Verona, A. II. S. 3.*] *Be*, for *am* or *is*, was originally the mistake of one *mode* for another. It, afterwards, grew into credit ; and seemed to take an air of consistency and regularity, when somebody had bethought himself to use, *be'st*, in the Second Person, for *art*. Hence, what grammarians call, the *double form* in the Indicative Present of the Auxiliary, *to be*. It is, now, deservedly exploded.

It grieves me, when I see what fate
 Does on the best of mankind wait.
 Poets, or lovers, let them be,
 'Tis neither love nor poesy
 Can arm against death's smallest dart
 The poet's head, or lover's heart.
 But, when their life, in its decline,
 Touches th' inevitable line,
 All the world's mortal to 'em then,
 And wine is aconite to men.
 Nay, in death's hand, the grape-stone proves
 As strong, as thunder is in Jove's.



XII.

THE PRAISE OF PINDAR [r].

A N O D E:

In Imitation of HORACE, Od. iv. ii.

I.

PINDAR is imitable by none;
 The phoenix Pindar is a vast species alone.

[r] *The praise of Pindar.*] This, and the three following odes are in the number of those, which Mr. Cowley calls, *Pindaric*: an exquisite sort of poetry, to which his
 Who

Who e'er, but Dædalus, with waxen wings could fly
And neither sink too low, nor soar too high?

What could he, who follow'd, claim,
But of vain boldness the unhappy fame,
And, by his fall, a sea to name?

Pindar's unnavigable song,
Like a swollen flood from some steep mountain, pours
along :

The ocean meets with such a voice
From his enlarged mouth, as drowns the ocean's noise.

2.

So Pindar does new words and figures roul
Down his impetuous dithyrambic tide,
Which in no channel deigns t' abide,
Which neither banks nor dikes controul.
Whether th' immortal gods he sings
In a no less immortal strain ;

Or the great acts of god-descended kings,
Who in his numbers still survive and reign.

Each rich embroider'd line,
Which their triumphant brows around,
By his sacred hand, is bound,
Does all their starry diadems outshine.

Style was very ill suited; being, for the most part, careless, and, sometimes, affectedly vulgar.—The ideas, in this ode, are from Horace; but the spirit and expression, are the writer's own.

3. Whether

3.

Whether at Pisa's race he please
 To carve in polish'd verse the conquerors' images :
 Whether the swift, the skilful, or the strong,
 Be crowned in his nimble, artful, vigorous song :
 Whether some brave young man's untimely fate,
 In words worth dying for, he celebrate,
 Such mournful, and such pleasing words,
 As joy to his mother's and his mistress' grief affords :
 He bids him live and grow in fame,
 Among the stars he sticks his name [s] ;
 The grave can but the dross of him devour,
 So small is death's, so great the poet's, power.

4.

Lo, how th' obsequious wind, and swelling air,
 The Theban swan [t] does upwards bear
 Into the walks of clouds, where he does play,
 And with extended wings opens his liquid way.

[s] *Among the stars he sticks his name*

"Stellis inferere et concilio Jovis," Hor. Od. III.

25. COWLEY.

[t] *The Theban swan* Mr. Gray calls him, *the Theban eagle* ; but the imagery of both poets is much the same.

— "tho' he inherit

"Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,

"That the Theban eagle bear

"Sailing with supreme dominion

"Thro' the azure deep of air," Progress of Poetry.

VOL. I.

M

Whilst,

Whilst, alas, my tim'rous Muse
 Unambitious tracks pursues;
 Does, with weak unballast wings,
 About the mossy brooks and springs;
 About the trees new-blossom'd heads,
 About the gardens painted beds,
 About the fields and flowery meads,
 And all inferior beauteous things,
 Like the laborious bee,
 For little drops of honey flee [*u*],
 And there with humble sweets contents her industry.



XIII.

B R U T U S [*w*],

A N O D E.

I.

EXCELLENT Brutus, of all human race
 The best, till nature was improv'd by grace,

[*u*] — *flee*] The proper word had been *fly*, if the
 rhyme would have given leave. To *flee*, is properly to
move with speed out of the way of danger; to *fly*, to *move*
with speed on wings.

[*w*] The subject of this ode seems to have been
 chosen by the poet, for the sake of venting his indig-
 Till

Till men above themselves faith raised more,

Than reason above beasts, before.

Virtue was thy life's centre, and from thence

Did silently and constantly dispense

The gentle vigorous influence

To all the wide and fair circumference :

And all the parts upon it lean'd so easily,

Obe'y'd the mighty force so willingly,

nation against Cromwell.—It has been generally supposed, that Mr. Cowley had no ear for harmony, and even no taste of elegant expression. And one should be apt to think so, from his untuned verse and rugged style : but the case was only this : Donne and Jonson were the favourite poets of the time, and therefore the models, on which our poet was ambitious to form himself. But unhappily these poets *affected* harsh numbers and uncouth expression ; and what they affected, easily came to be looked upon as *beauties*. Even Milton himself, in his younger days, fell into this delusion. [See his poem on *Shakespeare*.] But the vigour of his genius, or, perhaps, his course of life, which led him out of the high-road of fashion, enabled him, in good time, to break through the snare of—*exemplar vitiis imitabile*. The court, which had worse things to answer for, kept poor Cowley eternally in it. *He forsook the conversation* (says Dr. Sprat, who designed him a compliment in the observation), *but never* THE LANGUAGE OF THE COURT.

That none could discord or disorder see
 In all their contrariety.
 Each had his motion natural and free,
 And the whole no more mov'd, than the whole
 world could be.

2.

From the strict rule some think that thou didst swerve
 (Mistaken honest men) in Cæsar's blood :
 What mercy could the tyrant's life deserve
 From him, who kill'd himself, rather than serve ?
 Th' heroic exaltations of good
 Are so far from understood,
 We count them vice : alas, our sight's so ill,
 That things, which swiftest move, seem to stand still.
 We look not upon virtue in her height,
 On her supreme idea, brave and bright,
 In the original light :
 But, as her beams reflected pass
 Through our own nature, or ill custom's glass,
 And 'tis no wonder so,
 If, with dejected eye,
 In standing pools we seek the sky,
 That stars, so high above, should seem to us below.

3.

Can we stand by, and see
 Our mother robb'd, and bound, and ravish'd be,
 Yet

Yet not to her assistance stir,
Pleas'd with the strength and beauty of the ra-
visher [x] ?

Or, shall we fear to kill him, if before
The cancell'd name of friend he bore ?

Ingrateful Brutus do they call ?
Ingrateful Cæsar, who could Rome enthral !

In act more barbarous and unnatural
(In th' exact balance of true virtue tried)
Than his successor Nero's parricide !

There's none, but Brutus, could deserve
That all men else should wish to serve,
And Cæsar's usurpt place to him should proffer ;
None can deserve 't, but he, who would refuse the
offer.

[x] This is well put. But *piety to the mother* must not
extinguish all regard for the mother's *sons*. Nothing con-
tributed so much, as the assassination of the first Cæsar, to
bring on all those tragedies, with which the gloomy and
unappeasable jealousy of his successors, afterwards, filled
the Roman annals. The question is not, what Cæsar
deserved, but what the true interest of the Roman people
required. For in these cases, as Macbeth well observes,

— “ we but teach
“ Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
“ To plague th' inventor ” — A. I. S. viii.

4.

Ill fate assum'd a body thee t' affright,
 And wrapt itself i'th' terrors of the night,
I'll meet thee at Philippi, said the spright;

I'll meet thee there, saidst thou,

With such a voice, and such a brow,
 As put the trembling ghost to sudden flight;

It vanish'd, as a taper's light

Goes out, when spirits appear in fight.

One would have thought, t' had heard the morning
 crow,

Or seen her well-appointed star
 Come marching up the eastern hill afar [y].

Nor durst it in Philippi's field appear,

But unseen attack'd thee there.

Had it presum'd in any shape thee to oppose,

'Thou wouldst have forc'd it back upon thy foes:

Or slain 't, like Cæsar, though it be

A conqueror, and a monarch, mightier far, than he.

5.

What joy can human things to us afford,

When we see perish thus, by odd events,

Ill men, and wretched accidents,

The best cause, and best man that ever drew a sword?

[y] — *eastern hill afar.*

"Till down the eastern-cliffs afar,

"Hyperion's march they spy, and glitt'ring shafts of war."

Mr. Gray.

When

When we see
The false Octavius, and wild Antony,
God-like Brutus, conquer thee?
What can we say, but thine own tragic word,
That virtue, which had worship'd been by thee
As the most solid good, and greatest deity,
By this fatal proof became
An idol only, and a name?
Hold, noble Brutus, and restrain
The bold voice of thy generous disdain:
These mighty gulphs are yet
Too deep for all thy judgement and thy wit.
The time's set forth already, which shall quell
Stiff reason, when it offers to rebel;
Which these great secrets shall unseal,
And new philosophies reveal.
A few years more, so soon hadst thou not died;
Would have confounded human virtue's pride,
And shew'd thee a God crucified.



XIV.

To Mr. HOBBS [a].

I.

VAST bodies of philosophy
 I oft have seen, and read;
 But all are bodies dead,
 Or bodies, by art fashioned;
 I never yet the living soul could see,
 But in thy books, and thee.
 'Tis only God can know
 Whether the fair idea thou dost show
 Agree intirely with his own, or no.
 This I dare boldly tell,
 'Tis so like truth, 'twill serve our turn as well [b].

[a] Mr. Hobbes was, at this time, the philosopher in fashion: and Mr. Cowley speaks the fashionable, rather than his own sense of him; as appears from the exaggerated strain of his panegyric. However, he does but justice to the vigour of his sense, and the manly elegance of his style: for the *latter* of which qualities, chiefly, his philosophic writings are now valuable.

[b] *This I dare boldly tell, 'Tis so like truth, 'twill serve our turn as well.*] The writer, indeed, is a poet: but this was rather *too boldly* said.

Just

Just, as in nature, thy proportions be,
 As full of concord, their variety;
 As firm the parts upon their centre rest;
 And all so solid are, that they at least,
 As much as nature, emptiness detest.

2.

Long did the mighty Stagirite retain [c]
 The universal intellectual reign,
 Saw his own country's short-liv'd leopard slain [d];
 The stronger Roman-eagle did outfly [e],
 Oftner renewed his age, and saw that die;
 Meccha itself, in spite of Mahomet, possess'd [f],
 And, chas'd by a wild deluge from the East,

[c] Aristotle; so called from the town of Stagira, where he was born, situated near the bay of Strimon in Macedonia. COWLEY.

[d] Outlasted the Grecian empire, which, in the visions of Daniel, is represented by a leopard, with four wings upon the back, and four heads, chap. vii. 6. COWLEY.

[e] Was received even beyond the bounds of the Roman empire, and out-lived it. COWLEY.

[f] For Aristotle's philosophy was in great esteem among the Arabians or Saracens; witness those many excellent books upon him, or according to his principles, written by Averroes, Avicenna, Avempace, and divers others. *In spite of Mahomet*: because his law, being adapted to the barbarous humour of those people he had

His

His monarchy new planted, in the West;
 But, as in time each great imperial race
 Degenerates, and gives some new one place;
 So did this noble empire waste,
 Sunk by degrees from glories past,
 And in the school-mens hands it perish'd quite at last.
 Then nought, but words, it grew,
 And those, all barbarous, too:
 It perish'd, and it vanish'd there,
 The life and soul, breath'd out, became but empty
 air.

3.

The fields, which answer'd well the ancients plough,
 Spent and out-worn, return no harvest now,
 In barren age wild and unglorious lie,
 And boast of past fertility,
 The poor relief of present poverty.
 Food and fruit we now must want,
 Unless new lands we plant.

We break up tombs with sacrilegious hands;

first to deal withal, and aiming only at greatness of empire by the sword, forbids all the studies of learning; which (nevertheless) flourished admirably under the Saracen monarchy, and continued so, till it was extinguished with that empire, by the inundation of the Turks, and other nations. Meccha is the town in Arabia where Mahomet was born. COWLEY.

Old

Old rubbish we remove;
 To walk in ruins, like vain ghosts, we love.
 And with fond divining wands [g]
 We search among the dead
 For treasures buried,
 Whilst still the liberal earth does hold
 So many virgin mines of undiscover'd gold.

4.

The Baltic, Euxine, and the Caspian,
 And slender-limb'd Mediterranean [b],
 Seem narrow creeks to thee, and only fit
 For the poor wretched fisher-boats of wit.
 Thy nobler vessel the vast ocean tries,
 And nothing fees, but seas and skies,
 Till unknown regions it descries,
 Thou great Columbus of the golden lands of new
 philosophies.

[g] *Virgula divina*, or a divining wand, is a two-forked branch of an hazel-tree, which is used for the finding out either of veins, or hidden treasures of gold or silver; and being carried about, bends downwards (or rather is said to do so) when it comes to the place where they lye. Cow-
 LEY.

[b] All the navigation of the ancients was in these seas; they seldom ventured into the ocean; and when they did, did only *litus legere*, coast about near the shore.
 COWLEY.

Thy

Thy task was harder much, than his;
 For thy learn'd America is
 Not only found out first by thee,
 And rudely left to future industry;
 But thy eloquence, and thy wit,
 Has planted, peopled, built, and civiliz'd it.

5.

I little thought before,
 (Nor, being my ownself so poor,
 Could comprehend so vast a store)
 That all the wardrobe of rich eloquence
 Could have afforded half enough,
 Of bright, of new, and lasting stuff,
 To cloathe the mighty limbs of thy gigantic sense [i].
 Thy solid reason, like the shield from heaven
 To the Trojan hero given [4],

[i] The meaning is, that his notions are so new, and so great, that I did not think it had been possible to have found out words to express them clearly; as no wardrobe can furnish cloaths to fit a body taller and bigger than ever any was before; for the cloaths were made according to some measure that then was. COWLEY.

[4] See the excellent description of this shield, made by Vulcan, at the request of Venus, for her son Æneas, at the end of the eighth book of the Æneid,

— “et clypei non enarrabile textum,”
 whereon was graven all the Roman history. COWLEY.

Too strong to take a mark from any mortal dart,
Yet shines with gold and gems in every part,
And wonders on it grav'd by the learn'd hand of
art;

A shield, that gives delight
Even to the enemies fight,
Then, when they're sure to lose the combat by't [1].

6.

Nor can the snow, which now cold age does shed
Upon thy reverend head,
Quench or allay the noble fires within;

But all which thou hast been,
And all that youth can be, thou'rt yet,
So fully still dost thou
Enjoy the manhood, and the bloom of wit,
And all the natural heat, but not the fever, too.
So contraries on *Ætna's* top [m] conspire,
Here hoary frosts, and by them breaks out fire [n].

[1] — *to lose the combat by't.*] As not a few did, who presumed, with very unequal arms, to try the temper of that magic shield; which time and common sense, however, have at length disenchant.

[m] *So contraries on Ætna's top*] By making the frosts on *Ætna's top*, a comparison only, and not enlarging directly on the contrary qualities of cold and heat, taken sometimes in the literal sense, and sometimes in the metaphorical, the

A secure

A secure peace the faithful neighbours keep,
Th' embolden'd snow next to the flame does sleep.

poet has kept clear, in a good degree, of that *mixt wit* (as Mr. Addison calls it), in which he so much excelled and delighted. The fire of Hobbes' genius, breaking out under the snow of his gray hairs, might have been set in so many different lights by our ingenious author, and have been worked up by him into such a variety of amusing contrasts, that the temperate use of his darling faculty, in this instance, deserves our commendation.

[n] The description of the neighbourhood of fire and snow upon *Ætna* (but not the application of it), is imitated out of Claud. l. i. de Raptu Prof.

"Sed quamvis nimio fervens exuberet æstu,

"Scit nivibus fervare fidem, pariterque favillis

"Durescit glacies, tanti secura vaporis,

"Arcano defensa gelu, fumoque fideli

"Lambit contiguas innoxia flamma pruinas."

Where, methinks, is somewhat of that which Seneca objects to Ovid, *Nescivit quod bene cessit relinquere*. When he met with a fancy that pleased him, he could not find in his heart to quit, or ever to have done with it. Tacitus has the like expression of Mount Libanus, *Præcipuum montium Libani, mirum dictu, tantos inter ardores opacum, fidumque nivibus*; shady among such great heats, and faithful to the snow; which is too poetical for the prose even of a romance, much more of an historian. Sil. Italic. of *Ætna*, l. xiv.

"Summo cana jugo cohibet (mirabile dictu)

"Vicinam flammis glaciem, æternoque rigore

And,

And, if we weigh, like thee,
 Nature, and causes, we shall see
 That thus it needs must be,
 To things immortal time can do no wrong,
 And that which never is to die, for ever must be
 young.



XV.

LIFE AND FAME.

OH life, thou nothing's younger brother [e]!
 So like, that one might take one for the other [p]!

"Ardentes horrent scopuli, stat vertice celsi

"Collis hyems, calidaque nivem tegit atra favillâ."

See likewise Seneca, Epist. 79. COWLEY.

[e] Because nothing preceded it, as privation does all being; which perhaps is the sense of the distinction of days in the story of the creation; night signifying the privation, and day, the subsequent being, from whence the evening is placed first, Gen. i. 5. "And the evening and the morning were the first day." COWLEY.

[p] *Oh life, thou nothing's younger brother!*
So like, that one might take one for the other! i. e. *life is less than nothing, but, as being come of nothing, is very like it.* Mr. Cowley's poetry (as here) is often much disfigured by the double affectation of wit and familiarity. He would say an
 What's

What's somebody, or nobody [*q*] ?
 In all the cobwebs of the schoolmen's trade [*r*],
 We no such nice distinction woven see,
 As 'tis, to be, or, not to be.
 Dream of a shadow [*s*] ! a reflection, made
 From the false glories of the gay reflected bow [*t*],
 Is a more solid thing than thou.

out-of-the-way thing, in a trivial manner.—But such was the court-idea, in his time, of writing, like a gentleman.

[*q*] Τί δὲ τίς, εἰ δ' ἔστις ; Ἐνίας ὄναρ ἀνδρῶν. Pindar.
What is somebody, or what is nobody ? Man is the dream of a shadow. COWLEY.

[*r*] The distinctions of the schoolmen may be likened to cobwebs (I mean many of them, for some are better woven) either because of the too much fineness of the work, which makes it slight, and able to catch only little creatures ; or because they take not the materials from nature, but spin it out of themselves. COWLEY.

[*s*] *Dream of a shadow !* Justly admired by Plutarch as a most ingenious and expressive hyperbole. Vol. ii. p. 104. ed. Xyland. Par. 1624.

[*t*] The rainbow is in itself of no colour ; those that appear are but reflections of the sun's light received differently.

"Mille trahit varios adverso sole colores." as is evident by artificial rainbows ; and yet this shadow, this almost nothing, makes sometimes another rainbow (but not so distinct or beautiful) by reflection. COWLEY.

Vain

Vain weak-built isthmus [u], which dost proudly
rise

Up betwixt two eternities [w];

Yet canst nor wave nor wind sustain;

But, broken and o'erwhelm'd, the endless oceans
meet again.

2.

And with what rare inventions do we strive,

Ourselves then to survive?

Wise, subtle arts, and such as well befit

That nothing man's no wit.

[u] Isthmus is a neck of land that divides a peninsula from the continent, and is betwixt two seas, τῆ ἀμφοδ-
λαοῦ. In which manner this narrow passage of life di-
vides the past time from the future, and is at last swal-
lowed up into eternity. COWLEY.

[w] Isthmus, — betwixt two eternities;] A sublime idea,
which lay unnoticed in this ode, till Mr. Pope produced
it into observation —

“Placed on this *isthmus of a middle state*,

“A being darkly wise, and rudely great.”

Ess. on Man, Ep. iii. 3.

Not but our philosophical poet had his eye, also, on
M. Pascal — “qu'est-ce que l'homme dans la nature?

“Un néant à l'égard de l'infini, un tout à l'égard du
“néant, *un milieu entre rien et tout*. Il est infiniment

“éloigné des deux extrêmes; et son être n'est moins dis-
“tant du néant d'où il est tiré, que de l'infini où il est

“englouti.” *Pensées*, c. xxii.

Some with vast costly tombs would purchase it,
And, by the proofs of death, pretend to live.

Here lies the great—False marble, where?
Nothing but small and fordid dust lies there.

Some build enormous mountain-palaces,

The fools and architects to please:

A lasting life in well-hewn stone they rear:

So he, who on th' Egyptian shore [x]
Was slain, so many hundred years before,

Lives still (oh life, most happy and most dear!

Oh life, that Epicures envy to hear [y]!)

Lives in the dropping ruins of his amphitheatre.

His [z] father-in-law [a] an higher place does claim
In the seraphic entity of fame [b].

[x] Pompey the great. COWLEY.

[y] An irony; that is, oh life which Epicures laugh
at and condemn. COWLEY.

[z] Caesar, whose daughter Julia was married to Pompey; an alliance fatal to the commonwealth; which, as Tully says, ought never to have been made, or never ended. COWLEY.

[a] *His father-in-law*. This, again, is in the familiar style. He might have said, more suitably to the style of an ode—

“Great Caesar’s self,”

[b] Supernatural, intellectual, unintelligible being.
COWLEY.

He,

He, since that toy, his death [c],
 Does fill all mouths, and breathes in all men's breath.
 'Tis true, the two immortal syllables [d] remain,
 But, o ye learned men, explain,
 What essence, what existence this,
 What substance, what subsistence, what hypostasis,
 In fix poor letters is?
 In those alone does the great Cæsar live,
 'Tis all the conquer'd world could give.

[c] — *that toy, his death*] Called a *toy*, because the play-thing of every declaimer, from that time to this, and, by passing through so many hands, more instrumental to the propagation of Cæsar's fame, than all the glories of his life.

[d] — *two immortal syllables*] This lively ridicule, on *posthumous fame*, is well enough placed in a poem, or declamation: but we are a little surprized to find so grave a writer, as Mr. Wollaston, diverting himself with it. "In reality (says he) the man is not known ever the more to posterity, because his name is transmitted to them: he doth not live, because his *name* does. When it is said, "J. Cæsar subdued Gaul, beat Pompey, changed the Roman commonwealth," &c. — *Rel. of Nat. Sect. v.* — The sophistry is apparent. Put *Cato* in the place of Cæsar, and then see whether that great man do not live in his name, *substantially*, that is, to good purpose, if the impression, which those *two immortal syllables* make on the mind, be of use in exciting posterity, or any one man, to the love and imitation of Cato's virtue.

We poets, madder yet than all,
 With a refin'd fantastic vanity,
 Think, we not only have, but give eternity.
 Fain would I see that prodigal,
 Who his to-morrow would bestow
 For all old Homer's life, e'er since he died, till now.



XVI.

O D E.

ACME and SEPTIMIUS:

Out of CATULLUS.

WHILST on Septimius' panting breast,
 (Meaning nothing less than rest)

Acme lean'd her loving head,

Thus the pleas'd Septimius said;

My dearest Acme, if I be

Once alive, and love not thee

With a passion far above

All that e'er was called love,

In a Libyan desert may

I become some lion's prey;

Let

Let him, Acme, let him tear
My breast, when Acme is not there.

The god of love, who stood to hear him,
(The god of love was always near him)
Pleas'd and tickled with the sound,
Sneez'd aloud; and all around
The little loves, that waited by,
Bow'd, and blest'd the augury.
Acme, inflam'd with what he said,
Rear'd her gently-bending head,
And, her purple mouth with joy
Stretching to the delicious boy,
Twice (and twice could scarce suffice)
She kiss'd his drunken, rowling eyes.

My little life, my all (said she),
So may we ever servants be
To this best god, and ne'er retain
Our hated liberty again,
So may thy passion last for me,
As I a passion have for thee,
Greater and fiercer much than can
Be conceiv'd by thee, a man.
Into my marrow is it gone,
Fix'd and settled in the bone,
It reigns not only in my heart,
But runs, like life, through ev'ry part.

She spoke; the god of love, aloud,
Sneez'd again; and all the crowd
Of little loves, that waited by,
Bow'd, and bless'd the augury.

This good omen thus from heaven,
Like a happy signal, given,
Their loves and lives (all four) embrace;
And hand in hand run all the race.
To poor Septimius (who did now
Nothing else but Acme grow)
Acme's bosom was alone
The whole world's imperial throne,
And to faithful Acme's mind
Septimius was all human kind,
If the gods would please to be
But advis'd for once by me,
I'd advise them, when they spy
Any illustrious piety,
To reward her, if it be she;
To reward him, if it be he;
With such a husband, such a wife [e],
With Acme's and Septimius' life.

[e] — *such a husband, such a wife* It is to be observed,
to the honour of our author's morals, and good taste, that,
by this little deviation from his original, he has converted

THE COMPLAINT[f].

1.

IN a deep vision's intellectual scene,
 Beneath a bower for sorrow made,
 Th' uncomfortable shade,
 Of the black yew's unlucky green,
 Mix'd with the mourning willow's careful grey,
 Where reverend Cam cuts out his famous way,
 The melancholy Cowley lay:
 And lo! a Muse appear'd to his clos'd sight,
 (The Muses oft in lands of vision play)
 Bodied, array'd, and seen by an internal light,
 A golden harp, with silver strings, she bore,
 A wondrous hieroglyphic robe she wore,

a loose love-poem into a sober epithalamium. We have all the grace, and, what is more, all the warmth of Catullus, without his indecency.

[f] The plan of this poem is highly poetical: and, though the numbers be not the most pleasing, the expression is almost everywhere natural and beautiful. But its principal charm is that air of melancholy, thrown over the whole, so expressive of the poet's character.

The *address* of the writer is seen in conveying his just reproaches on the *court*, under a pretended vindication of it against the *Muse*.

In which all colours and all figures were,
 That nature or that fancy can create,
 That art can never imitate;
 And with loose pride it wanton'd in the air,
 In such a dress, in such a well-cloath'd dream,
 She us'd, of old, near fair Ismenus' stream,
 Pindar her Theban favourite to meet;
 A crown was on her head, and wings were on her
 feet.

2.
 She touch'd him with her harp, and rais'd him
 from the ground;

The shaken strings melodiously resound.

Art thou return'd at last, said she,

To this forsaken place and me?

Thou prodigal, who didst so loosely waste

Of all thy youthful years, the good estate;

Art thou return'd here, to repent too late?

And gather husks of learning up at last,

Now the rich harvest-time of life is past,

And winter marches on so fast?

But, when I meant t' adopt thee for my son,

And did as learn'd a portion assign,

As ever any of the mighty Nine

Had to their dearest children done;

When I resolv'd t' exalt thy' anointed name,
 Among the spiritual lords [g] of peaceful fame;
 Thou changeling, thou, bewitch'd with noise and
 show,

Wouldst into courts and cities from me go;
 Wouldst see the world abroad, and have a share
 In all the follies and the tumults there,
 Thou wouldst, forsooth, be something in a state,
 And business thou wouldst find, and wouldst create;

Business! the frivolous pretence
 Of human lusts, to shake off innocence;

Business! the grave impertinence:
 Business! the thing which I of all things hate,
 Business! the contradiction of thy fate.

3.

Go, renegado, cast up thy account,
 And see to what amount

Thy foolish gains by quitting me:
 The sale of knowledge, fame, and liberty,
 The fruits of thy unlearn'd apostacy.

[g] — *Spiritual Lords*] Alluding to the style of the
 House of Lords—the *Lords Spiritual and Temporal*.—The
 poet, on this and many other occasions, forgot his own
 definition of true wit by negatives—

“ 'Tis not, when two like words make up one noise.”

St. ii. 6.

Thou

Thou thought'st, if once the public storm were past,
 All thy remaining life should sun-shine be :
 Behold, the public storm is spent at last,
 The sovereign is tost at sea no more,
 And thou, with all the noble company,
 Art got at last to shore.
 But, whilst thy fellow-voyagers I see
 All march'd up to possess the promis'd land,
 Thou still alone (alas) dost gaping stand,
 Upon the naked beach, upon the barren sand.

4.

As a fair morning of the blessed spring,
 After a tedious stormy night ;
 Such was the glorious entry of our king,
 Enriching moisture drop'd on every thing :
 Plenty he sow'd below, and cast about him light.
 But then (alas) to thee alone,
 One of old Gideon's miracles was shown,
 For every tree, and every herb around,
 With pearly dew was crown'd,
 And upon all the quicken'd ground,
 The fruitful seed of heaven did brooding lie,
 And nothing but the Muse's fleece was dry.
 It did all other threats surpass,
 When God to his own people said,

(The

(The men, whom through long wanderings he had
led)

That he would give them ev'n a heaven of brass;
They look'd up to that heaven in vain,
That bounteous heaven, which God did not restrain,
Upon the most unjust to shine and rain.

5.

The Rachel [b], for which twice seven years and
more,

Thou didst with faith and labour serve,
And didst (if faith and labour can) deserve,

Though she contracted was to thee,
Giv'n to another thou didst see;

Giv'n to another, who had store
Of fairer, and of richer wives, before;
And not a Leah left, thy recompence to be.
Go on, twice seven years more, thy fortune try,
Twice seven years more, God in his bounty may

Give thee, to fling away
Into the court's deceitful lottery.

But think how likely 'tis, that thou,
With the dull work of thy unweildy plough,
Shouldst in a hard and barren season thrive,
Shouldst even able be to live;

[b] *The Rachel*] The mastership of the Savoy.

Thou,

Thou, to whose share so little bread did fall,
In the miraculous year, when manna rain'd on all.

6.

Thus spake the Muse, and spake it with a smile,
That seem'd at once to pity and revile.
And to her thus, raising his thoughtful head,

The melancholy Cowley said :

Ah wanton foe, dost thou upbraid

The ills, which thou thyself hast made?

When, in the cradle, innocent I lay,

Thou, wicked spirit, stolest me away,

And my abused soul didst bear

Into thy new-found worlds, I know not where,

Thy golden Indies in the air :

And ever since I strive in vain

My ravish'd freedom to regain ;

Still I rebel, still thou dost reign ;

Lo, still in verse against thee I complain.

There is a sort of stubborn weeds,

Which, if the earth but once, it ever breeds.

No wholesome herb can near them thrive,

No useful plant can keep alive :

The foolish sports I did on thee bestow,

Make all my art and labour fruitless now ;

Where once such Fairies dance, no grasses [i] doth
ever grow.

[i] — no grasses i. e. no grass which turns to profit.—

7. When

7.

When my new mind had no infusion known,
 Thou gav'st so deep a tincture of thine own,
 That ever since I vainly try
 To wash away th' inherent dye:

Long work perhaps may spoil thy colours quite,
 But never will reduce the native white:

To all the ports of honour and of gain
 I often steer my course in vain;

Thy gale comes cross, and drives me back again.
 Thou slack'nest all my nerves of industry,

By making them so oft to be
 The tinkling strings of thy loose minstrelsy.
 Whoever this world's happiness would see,

Must as entirely cast off thee,
 As they, who only heaven desire,
 Do from the world retire.

The poet alludes, in this verse, to the *four ringlets*, which are sometimes found in pasture-grounds, and, according to the philosophy of the country-people, are occasioned by fairies dancing upon them. He had probably his eye on that fine passage of Shakespear—

—“ye demy-puppets, that
 “By moon-shine do the green four ringlets make,
 “Whereof the ewe not bites”——

Tempest, A. v. S. ii.

This

This was my error, this my gross mistake,
 Myself a demy-votary to make.
 Thus, with Sapphira and her husband's fate,
 (A fault which I, like them, am taught too late)
 For all that I gave up, I nothing gain,
 And perish for the part which I retain.

8.

Teach me not, then, o thou fallacious Muse,
 The court, and better king [*k*], t' accuse;
 The heaven, under which I live, is fair;
 The fertile soil will a full harvest bear;
 Thine, thine, is all the barrenness; if thou
 Mak'st me sit still and finge, when I should plough:
 When I but think, how many a tedious year
 Our patient sovereign did attend
 His long misfortunes' fatal end!
 How chearfully, and how exempt from fear,
 On the great Sovereign's will he did depend;

[*k*] — *better king*] i. e. *better* in his own nature, than *the court* [his ministers,] would allow him to be. The supposition was decent, but not true. The minister of that time was just, nay generous, to our poet. [See *Lord Clarendon's Life*, Part i. 16.] but, unluckily, the poet's patrons were the minister's most determined enemies. In the mean time, *the better king* cared neither for the minister, nor the poet.

I ought

I ought to be accurs'd, if I refuse
To wait on his, o thou fallacious Muse!
Kings have long hands (they say); and though I be
So distant, they may reach at length to me.

However, of all princes, thou
Should'st not reproach rewards, for being small or
flow;

Thou, who rewardest but with popular breath,
And that too, after death.



XVIII.

On the Death of Mrs. CATHARINE

! bno PHILIPS [1].

CRUEL disease! ah, could it not suffice

Thy old and constant spight to exercise
Against the gentlest and the fairest sex,
Which still thy depredations most do vex?

[1] This poem is preserved, in honour of the lady,
here celebrated, who had the fortune to be equally esteem-
ed by the best poet and best divine of her age.

And

Where still thy malice most of all
 (Thy malice or thy lust) does on the fairest fall ?
 And in them most assault the fairest place,
 The throne of empress beauty, ev'n the face ?
 There was enough of that here to assuage
 (One would have thought) either thy lust or rage;
 Was't not enough, when thou, prophane disease,
 Didst on this glorious temple seize ;
 Was't not enough, like a wild zealot, there,
 All the rich outward ornaments to tear,
 Deface the innocent pride of beauteous images ?
 Was't not enough thus rudely to defile,
 But thou must quite destroy, the goodly pile ?
 And thy unbounded sacrilege commit
 On th' inward holiest holy [*m*] of her wit ?
 Cruel disease ! There thou mistook'st thy power ;
 No mine of death can that devour,
 On her embalmed name it will abide
 An everlasting pyramide,
 As high as heav'n the top, as earth the basis wide.

2.

All ages past record, all countries now,
 In various kinds, such equal beauties show,

[*m*] *holiest holy*] I wish the poet had forborn this allusion.

That

That ev'n judge Paris [n] would not know
 On whom the golden apple to bestow;
 Though goddeſſes to his ſentence did ſubmit,
 Women and lovers would appeal from it:
 Nor durſt he ſay, of all the female race,

This is the ſovereign face.
 And ſome (though theſe be of a kind that's rare,
 That's much, ah, much leſs frequent, than the fair)
 So equally renown'd for virtue are,
 That it the mother of the gods might poſe,
 When the beſt woman for her guide ſhe choſe [o].

But, if Apollo ſhould deſign
 A woman laureat to make,
 Without diſpute he would Orinda take,
 Though Sappho and the famous Nine
 Stood by, and did repine.

To be a princeſs or a queen,
 Is great; but 'tis a greatneſs always ſeen;
 The world did never but two women know,
 Who, one by fraud, th' other by wit, did riſe

[n] —judge Paris] Familiar, again, or rather bur-
 leſque; quite out of ſeaſon.

[o] Alluding to the introduction of the ſtatue of *Cybele*
 into Rome: *Liv.* l. xxix. The goddeſs, indeed, had a long
 train of Roman matrons for her attendants. But, as the
 hiſtorian tells the ſtory, ſhe choſe the *beſt man* in Rome
 for her *hoſt*; not the *beſt woman*, for her *guide*. Whether
 the poet forgot himſelf, or purpoſely falſified the ſtory for
 the ſake of his application, I know not.

To the two tops of spiritual dignities [o],
One female pope of old, one female poet now.

3.

Of female poets, who had names of old,
Nothing is shown, but only told;
And all we hear of them perhaps may be
Male-flattery only, and male-poetry.
Few minutes did their beauties lightning waste,
The thunder of their voice did longer last,
But that, too, soon was past.

The certain proofs of our Orinda's wit,
In her own lasting characters are writ;
And they will long my praise of them survive,
Though long perhaps, too, that may live.
The trade of glory manag'd by the pen,
Though great it be, and every where is found,
Does bring in but small profit to us men;
'Tis by the number of the sharers drown'd.
Orinda, on the female coasts of fame,
Ingrosses all the goods of a poetic name.
She does no partner with her see,
Does all the business there alone, which we
Are forc'd to carry on by a whole company.

[o] — *spiritual dignities*] *Spiritual*, in the double sense of *witty*, and *religious*. We had this *equivoque* before, in the *Complaint*, St. 2.

“ *Among the spiritual lords of peaceful fame* ” —
— it was too much to entertain us with it, a second time.

4. But

4.

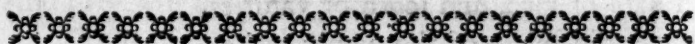
But wit's like a luxuriant vine;
 Unless to virtue's prop it join,
 Firm and erect towards heaven bound;
 Though it with beauteous leaves and pleasant fruit
 be crown'd,
 It lies deform'd, and rotting on the ground.
 Now shame and blushes on us all,
 Who our own sex superior call!
 Orinda does our boasting sex out-do,
 Not in wit only, but in virtue too.
 She does above our best examples rise,
 In hate of vice, and scorn of vanities.
 Never did spirit of the manly make,
 And dipt all o'er in learning's sacred lake,
 A temper more invulnerable take.
 No violent passion could an entrance find,
 Into the tender goodness of her mind;
 Through walls of stone those furious bullets may
 Force their impetuous way,
 When her soft breast they hit, powerless and dead
 they lay.

5.

The fame of friendship [p] which so long had told
 Of three or four illustrious names of old,

[p] *The fame of friendship*. Mrs. Philips was as much
 famed for her *friendships*, as for her poetry. Dr. J. Taylor

Till hoarse and weary with the tale she grew,
 Rejoices now t'have got a new,
 A new, and more surprizing story,
 Of fair Leucasia's and Orinda's glory.
 As when a prudent man does once perceive
 That in some foreign country he must live,
 The language and the manners he does strive
 To understand and practise here,
 That he may come, no stranger there;
 So well Orinda did herself prepare
 In this much different clime for her remove
 To the glad world of poetry and love.



XIX.

H Y M N.

T O L I G H T [q].

FIRST-born of Chaos, who so fair didst come
 From the old Negro's darksome womb!
 Which when it saw the lovely child,
 The melancholy mase put on kind looks, and smil'd,

addressed his discourse *on the nature and offices of friendship,*
 to this lady.

[q] The moral strokes in this hymn amply atone for
 the false wit and quaint imagery, in which it too much

2. Thou

2.

Thou tide of glory, which no rest dost know,
But ever ebb, and ever flow !
Thou golden shower of a true Jove !
Who does in thee descend, and heaven to earth make
love !

3.

Hail, active nature's watchful life and health !
Her joy, her ornament, and wealth !
Hail to thy husband, heat, and thee !
Thou, the world's beautiful bride ; the lusty bride-
groom, he !

4.

Say, from what golden quivers of the sky,
Do all thy winged arrows fly ?
Swiftness and power by birth are thine :
From thy great fire they came, thy fire, the Word
Divine.

abounds.—It was the malady of that age to be only taken,
“ With glitt’ring thoughts struck out at ev’ry line :”

Pope.

And the abundance of Mr. Cowley's wit made it but too
easy for him to regale the vitiated taste of his readers
with this sort of entertainment.

O 3

5. 'Tis,

5.

'Tis, I believe, this archery to show,
 That so much cost in colours thou
 And skill in painting dost bestow
 Upon thy ancient arms, the gawdy heavenly bow.

6.

Swift as light thoughts their empty carrier run,
 Thy race is finish'd, when begun;
 Let a post-angel start with thee [r],
 And thou the goal of earth shalt reach, as soon as
 he.

7.

Thou, in the moon's bright chariot proud and gay,
 Dost thy bright wood of stars survey;
 And all the year dost with thee bring
 Of thousand flowery lights thine own nocturnal
 spring.

[r] — *post-angel start with thee*] One of the most glaring faults in the poetry of Mr. Cowley's age was the debasing of great sentiments and images by low allusions and vulgar expressions. What the reader looked for, was wit; and he looked no farther: as if that rule of common sense had been a discovery of yesterday—

“ *Expression* is the dress of thought, and still

“ *Appears more decent, as more suitable.*”

Pope, Essay on Crit. ver. 318.

8. Thou,

8.

Thou, Scythian-like, dost round thy lands above
 The sun's gilt tent for ever move,
 And still, as thou in pomp dost go,
 The shining pageants of the world attend thy show.

9.

Nor, amidst all these triumphs, dost thou scorn
 The humble glow-worms to adorn,
 And with those living spangles gild
 (O greatness without pride!) the bushes of the field.

10.

Night, and her ugly subjects [s], thou dost fright,
 And sleep, the lazy owl of night;
 Asham'd and fearful to appear
 They skreen their horrid shapes with the black
 hemisphere.

[s] *Night, and her ugly subjects, &c.*

“Night, and all her sickly dews,

“Her spectres wan, &c.—

Mr. Gray, in *The progress of poetry*.

This excellent writer, not unfrequently, alludes to passages in Mr. Cowley, whose manners and genius much resembled his own. Both charm us with the *spleen* of virtue; and both were equally qualified, by the gifts of nature, to adorn the nobler, and the more familiar poetry.—The taste, the execution, the success, were happily on the side of our late poet.

O 4

11. With

11.

With 'em there hastes, and wildly takes the alarm,
 Of painted dreams, a busy swarm;
 At the first opening of thine eye,
 The various clusters break, the antic atoms fly.

12.

The guilty serpents, and obscener beasts,
 Creep conscious to their secret rests :
 Nature to thee does reverence pay,
 Ill omens and ill sights removes out of thy way [t].

13.

At thy appearance, grief itself is said
 To shake his wings, and rouse his head;
 And cloudy care has often took
 A gentie beamy smile reflected from thy look,

14.

At thy appearance, fear itself grows bold;
 Thy sun-shine melts away his cold.
 Encourag'd at the sight of thee,
 To the cheek colour comes, and firmness to the knee.

[t] *Ill omens and ill sights removes out of thy way.*] Alluding to the old Roman superstition, which anxiously provided, when a great general marched out of the city, that no inauspicious object should obstruct or pollute his passage.

15. Even

15.

Even lust, the master of a harden'd face,
 Blushes, if thou beest in the place,
 To darkness' curtains he retires,
 In sympathizing night he rowls his smoaky fires.

16.

When, goddess, thou list ft up thy waken'd head
 Out of the morning's purple bed,
 Thy choir of birds about thee play,
 And all the joyful world salutes the rising day.

17.

The ghosts, and monster spirits, that did presume
 A body's privilege to assume,
 Vanish again invisibly,
 And bodies gain again their visibility.

18.

All the world's bravery, that delights our eyes,
 Is but thy several liveries,
 Thou the rich dye on them bestowest.
 Thy nimble pencil paints this landkip, as thou
 goest.

19.

A crimson garment in the rose thou wear'st;
 A crown of studded gold thou bear'st [u],
 The virgin lilies, in their white,
 Are clad but with the lawn of almost naked light.

20.

The violet, spring's little infant, stands
 Girt in thy purple swaddling-bands;
 On the fair tulip thou dost doat;
 Thou cloath'st it in a gay and party-colour'd
 coat [w].

21.

With flame condens'd thou dost the jewels fix,
 And solid colours in it mix:
 Flora herself envies to see
 Flowers fairer than her own, and durable as she.

[u] *A crown of studded gold thou bear'st* In the flower, so called, or *Crown Imperial*. The name of the flower, and of its bearing, being the same, he could not well express them both. Yet, in the connection which this line has with the foregoing, the mention of one only, has an ill effect.

[w] Prettily alluding to Joseph's coat of many colours, Gen. xxxvii. 3, 4.

22. Ah,

22.

Ah, goddess! would thou could'st thy hand with-
hold,
And be less liberal to gold;
Did'st thou less value to it give,
Of how much care (alas) might'st thou poor man
relieve!

23.

To me, the sun [*] is more delightful far,
And all fair days much fairer are.
But few, ah wondrous few there be,
Who do not gold prefer, o goddess, ev'n to thee.

24.

Through the soft ways of heaven, and air, and sea,
Which open all their pores to thee;
Like a clear river, thou dost glide,
And with thy living stream through the close chan-
nels slide.

[*] *To me, the sun* An inimitable stanza, in which
the whole soul of the poet comes out, and shines through
the purest and clearest expression: like one of the *virgin-*
lilies, he before celebrates,

— "*clad with the lawn of almost naked light.*"

25. But,

25.

But, where firm bodies thy free course oppose,
 Gently thy source the land o'erflows;
 Takes there possession, and does make,
 Of colours mingled, light, a thick and standing lake,

26.

But the vast ocean of unbounded day
 In th' empyréan heaven does stay.
 Thy rivers, lakes, and springs below
 From thence took first their rise, thither at last must
 flow.



XX.

To the ROYAL SOCIETY [y].

I.

PHILOSOPHY, the great and only heir
 Of all that human knowledge, which has been
 Unforfeited by man's rebellious sin,
 Though full of years he do appear,

[y] This poem (besides its intrinsic merit) is entitled
 to a place in this collection, because it serves to introduce
 (Philo-

(Philosophy, I say, and call it, He,
 For, whatsoe'er the painter's fancy be,
 It a male-virtue seems to me)
 Has still been kept in nonage till of late,
 Nor manag'd or enjoy'd his vast estate :
 Three or four thousand years, one would have
 thought,
 To ripeness and perfection might have brought
 A science so well bred and nurs'd [z],
 And of such hopeful parts too at the first.
 But, oh, the guardians and the tutors then,
 (Some negligent, and some ambitious men)
 Would ne'er consent to set him free,
 Or his own natural powers to let him see,
 Left that should put an end to their authority.

2.

That his own business he might quite forget,
 They' amus'd him with the sports of wanton wit,

the following *Proposition for the advancement of experimental philosophy*. It gives, too, an amiable picture of the poet's mind, in the concluding panegyric on his friend, Dr. Sprat, who had written the history of the *Royal Society*.

[z] *A science so well bred and nurs'd*] By Pythagoras and Democritus.

With

With the desserts of poetry they fed him [a],
 Instead of solid meats t' increase his force;
 Instead of vigorous exercise they led him
 Into the pleasant labyrinths of ever-fresh dis-
 course [b].

Instead of carrying him to see
 The riches which do hoarded for him lie
 In nature's endless treasury,
 They chose his eye to entertain
 (His curious, but not covetous eye [c])
 With painted scenes, and pageants of the brain [d]

[a] *With the desserts of poetry they fed him*] Much of the antient philosophy, was only a luscious mythology. The way of accounting for a natural phænomenon, was to tell a pleasant story. I suppose, the author had especially in view Lord Bacon's *Sapientia veterum*, where that wise man amused himself and others — *with the sports of wanton wit*.

[b] *Into the pleasant labyrinths of ever-fresh discourse*] The Platonic school, which joined eloquence to philosophy.

[c] *His curious, but not covetous eye*] i. e. ingenious speculation, and not use, was the object of that philosophy.

[d] — *pageants of the brain*] The peripatetic fancies —
 — “tricks to shew the stretch of human brain.”

Pope.

Some

Some few exalted spirits [*e*] this latter age has shown,
 That labour'd to assert the liberty
 (From guardians, who were now usurpers grown [*f*])
 Of this old minor still, captiv'd philosophy;
 But 'twas rebellion call'd, to fight
 For such a long-oppressed right.
 Bacon, at last, a mighty man, arose,
 Whom a wise king and nature chose
 Lord chancellor of both their laws,
 And boldly undertook the injur'd pupil's cause.

3.

Authority, which did a body boast,
 Though 'twas but air condens'd and stalk'd about,
 Like some old giant's more gigantic ghost,
 To terrify the learned rout,
 With the plain magic of true reason's light,
 He chac'd out of our fight,
 Nor suffer'd living men to be misled
 By the vain shadows of the dead:
 To graves, from whence it rose, the conquer'd phan-
 tom fled;

[*g*] * * * *

[*e*] *Some few exalted spirits*] P. Ramus, Gassendi, and
 Des Cartes.

[*f*] *From guardians—now usurpers grown*] i. e. from
 men, who, under colour of *guarding* the rights of the old
 philosophy, *tyrannized* over reason herself.

[*g*] The rest of this stanza is left out.

4. From

4.

From words, which are but pictures of the thought,
 (Though we our thoughts from them perversely drew)
 To things, the mind's right object, he it brought :
 Like foolish birds, to painted grapes we flew ;
 He fought, and gather'd for our use, the true ;
 And, when on heaps the chosen bunches lay,
 He press'd them wisely, the mechanic way [b],
 Till all their juice did in one vessel join,
 Ferment into a nourishment divine,

The thirsty soul's refreshing wine.

Who to the life an exact piece would make,
 Must not from others work a copy take ;

No, not from Rubens or Vandike ;

Much less content himself to make it like

Th' ideas and the images, which lie

In his own fancy, or his memory.

No, he before his sight must place

The natural and living face [i] ;

The real object must command

Each judgement of his eye, and motion of his hand,

[b] *the mechanic way*] i. e. in the way of *experiment*.

[i] *The natural and living face*]

“ The naked nature and the living grace.” Pope.

5.

From these, and all long errors of the way [*k*],
 In which our wandering predecessors went,
 And, like th' old Hebrews, many years did stray
 In deserts but of small extent;
 Bacon, like Moses, led us forth at last,
 The barren wilderness he past,
 Did on the very border stand
 Of the blest promis'd land,
 And from the mountain's top of his exalted wit,
 Saw it himself, and shew'd us it.
 But life did never to one man allow
 Time to discover worlds, and conquer too;
 Nor can so short a line sufficient be
 To fathom the vast depths of nature's sea.
 The work he did, we ought t' ad mire,
 And were unjust, if we should more require
 From his few years, divided 'twixt th' excess
 Of low affliction, and high happiness [*l*].

[*k*] — *errors of the way*] A beautiful Latinism—

“—*pelagine venis erroribus actus?*” Virg. *Æn.* vi. 532.

“*Sive errore via, seu tempestatibus acti.*” Ib. vii. 199.

[*l*] — ‘*twixt th' excess*

Of low affliction and high happiness] So expressed, as to convey not only the poet's idea of this situation, but his *sense* of it.

Vol. I.

P

For

For who on things remote can fix his fight,
That's always in a triumph, or a fight ?

6.

From you, great champions, we expect to get
These spacious countries, but discover'd yet ;
Countries, where yet, instead of nature, we
Her images and idols worship'd see :
These large and wealthy regions to subdue,
Though learning has whole armies at command,
Quarter'd about in every land,

A better troop she ne'er together drew.
Methinks, like Gideon's little band,
God with design has pick'd out you,
To do these noble wonders by a few :
When the whole host he saw, they are (said he)
Too many to o'ercome for me ;
And now he chuses out his men,
Much in the way that he did then :
Not those many, whom he found
Idly extended on the ground,
To drink with their dejected head
The stream, just so as by their mouths it fled :
No, but those few, who took the waters up,
And made of their laborious hands the cup.

7. Thus

7.

Thus you prepar'd; and in the glorious fight

Their wondrous pattern too [m] you take:
 Their old and empty pitchers first they brake,
 And with their hands then lifted up the light.

Io! sound too the trumpets here!
 Already your victorious lights appear;
 New scenes of heaven already we espy,
 And crowds of golden worlds on high;
 Which, from the spacious plains of earth and sea,
 Could never yet discover'd be
 By sailors or Chaldeans watchful eye:
 Nature's great works no distance can obscure,
 No smallness her near objects can secure;
 Ye have taught the curious fight to press
 Into the privatest recess
 Of her imperceptible littleness.
 Ye have learn'd to read her smallest hand,
 And well begun her deepest sense to understand.

8.

Mischief and true dishonour fall on those,
 Who would to laughter or to scorn [n] expose

[m] *Their wondrous pattern too*] His lavish wit never
 knows when to have done with an allusion.

[n] — *to laughter or to scorn*] It is not to be conceived

So virtuous and so noble a design,
 So human for its use, for knowledge so divine.
 The things, which these proud men despise, and call
 Impertinent, and vain, and small,
 Those smallest things of nature let me know,
 Rather than all their greatest actions do.
 Whoever would deposed truth advance
 Into the throne usurp'd from it,
 Must feel at first the blows of ignorance,
 And the sharp points of envious wit.
 So when, by various turns of the celestial dance,
 In many thousand years
 A star, so long unknown, appears,
 Though heaven itself more beauteous by it grow,
 It troubles and alarms the world below,
 Does to the wise a star, to fools a meteor, show.

9.

With courage and success you the bold work begin;
 Your cradle has not idle been :

what ridicule this society drew upon itself from the wits
 on its first institution —

“But sense surviv'd, when merry jests were past;

“For rising merit will buoy up at last.”

Pope.

None

None e'er, but Hercules and you, could be
 At five years age worthy a history.
 And ne'er did fortune better yet
 Th' historian [o] to the story fit :
 As you from all old errors free
 And purge the body of philosophy ;
 So from all modern follies he
 Has vindicated eloquence and wit.
 His candid style, like a clean stream, does slide,
 And his bright fancy all the way
 Does like the sun-shine in it play ;
 It does, like Thames, the best of rivers, glide,
 Where the god does not rudely overturn,
 But gently pour, the crystal urn,
 And with judicious hand does the whole current
 guide.
 T' has all the beauties, nature can impart,
 And all the comely dress, without the paint of art.

[o] Dr. Sprat.

END OF THE POEMS.

ΠΑΕΟΝ ΗΜΙΣΤ ΠΑΝΤΟΣ.

None can but be surprised that he could be

as our countrymen are so much

the more so, as he is a

And hence the

And his friends

It does like

What is it that the philosophical college do

is situated within one or two or (at far

about three miles of London, and it is

It is a place of great delight in the eyes of visitors

and in the eyes of the natives of Cowley, with

of which, addressed to Mr. Cowley, we find that

these great poets had amused themselves with

exalted, and, in the main, congenial fancies, on

subject of education, that of the two plans, proposed

this of Mr. Cowley was better devised, and is the

and it is in this respect, that it can be given

A

P R O P O S I T I O N

F O R

The ADVANCEMENT of EXPERI-
MENTAL PHILOSOPHY [a].

THE COLLEGE.

THAT the philosophical college be
situated within one, two, or (at far-
thest) three miles of London, and, if it

[a] Ingenious men delight in dreams of reformation.—In comparing this *Proposition* of Cowley, with *that* of Milton, addressed to Mr. Hartlib, we find that these great poets had amused themselves with some exalted, and, in the main, congenial fancies, on the subject of education: that, of the *two* plans, proposed, this of Mr. Cowley was better digested, and is the *less* fanciful; if a preference, in this respect, can be given to either, when both are manifestly Utopian: and that our universities, in their present form, are well enough calculated to answer all the reasonable ends of such institutions; provided we allow for the unavoidable defects of them, when drawn out into practice.

be possible to find that convenience, upon the side of the river, or very near it.

That the revenue of this college amount to four thousand pounds a year.

That the company received into it be as follows :

1. Twenty philosophers or professors.
2. Sixteen young scholars, servants to the professors.
3. A chaplain.
4. A bailiff for the revenue.
5. A manciple or purveyor for the provisions of the house.
6. Two gardeners.
7. A master-cook.
8. An under-cook.
9. A butler.
10. An under-butler.
11. A surgeon.
12. Two lungs, or chemical servants.
13. A library-keeper, who is likewise to be apothecary, druggist, and keeper of instruments, engines, &c.
14. An officer to feed and take care of all beasts, fowl, &c. kept by the college.
15. A groom of the stable.
16. A messenger to send up and down for all uses of the college.
17. Four old women, to tend the chambers, keep the house clean, and such like services.

That

That the annual allowance for this company be as follows: 1. To every professor, and to the chaplain, one hundred and twenty pounds. 2. To the sixteen scholars twenty pounds apiece, ten pounds for their diet, and ten pounds for their entertainment. 3. To the bailiff, thirty pounds, besides allowance for his journies. 4. To the purveyor, or manciple, thirty pounds. 5. To each of the gardeners, twenty pounds. 6. To the master cook, twenty pounds. 7. To the under-cook, four pounds. 8. To the butler, ten pounds. 9. To the under-butler, four pounds. 10. To the surgeon, thirty pounds. 11. To the library-keeper, thirty pounds. 12. To each of the lungs, twelve pounds. 13. To the keeper of the beasts, six pounds. 14. To the groom, five pounds. 15. To the messenger, twelve pounds. 16. To the four necessary women, ten pounds. For the manciples table, at which all the servants of the house are to eat, except the scholars, one hundred and sixty pounds. For three

horses for the service of the college, thirty pounds.

All which amounts to three thousand two hundred eighty-five pounds. So that there remains, for keeping of the house and gardens, and operatories, and instruments, and animals, and experiments of all sorts, and all other expences, seven hundred and fifteen pounds.

Which were a very inconsiderable sum for the great uses to which it is designed, but that I conceive the industry of the college will in a short time so enrich itself as to get a far better stock for the advance and enlargement of the work when it is once begun; neither is the continuance of particular mens liberality to be despaired of, when it shall be encouraged by the sight of that public benefit which will accrue to all mankind, and chiefly to our nation, by this foundation. Something likewise will arise from leases and other casualties; that nothing of which may be diverted to the private gain of the professors, or any other use

use besides that of the search of nature, and by it the general good of the world, and that care may be taken for the certain performance of all things ordained by the institution, as likewise for the protection and encouragement of the company, it is proposed :

That some person of eminent quality, a lover of solid learning, and no stranger in it, be chosen chancellor or president of the college ; and that eight governors more, men qualified in the like manner, be joined with him, two of which shall yearly be appointed visitors of the college, and receive an exact account of all expences even to the smallest, and of the true estate of their public treasure, under the hands and oaths of the professors resident.

That the choice of professors in any vacancy belong to the chancellor and the governors ; but that the professors (who are likeliest to know what men of the nation are most proper for the duties of their society) direct their choice, by recommending two or three persons

persons to them at every election: and that if any learned person within his majesty's dominions discover, or eminently improve, any useful kind of knowledge, he may upon that ground, for his reward and the encouragement of others, be preferred, if he pretend to the place, before any body else.

That the governors have power to turn out any professor, who shall be proved to be either scandalous or unprofitable to the society.

That the college be built after this, or some such manner: That it consist of three fair quadrangular courts, and three large grounds, inclosed with good walls behind them. That the first court be built with a fair cloister; and the professors lodgings, or rather little houses, four on each side, at some distance from one another, and with little gardens behind them, just after the manner of the Chartreux beyond sea. That the inside of the cloister be lined with a gravel-walk, and that walk with a row of trees;

trees; and that in the middle there be a parterre of flowers, and a fountain.

That the second quadrangle, just behind the first, be so contrived, as to contain these parts. 1. A chapel. 2. A hall, with two long tables on each side, for the scholars and officers of the house to eat at, and with a pulpit and forms at the end for the public lectures. 3. A large and pleasant dining-room within the hall, for the professors to eat in, and to hold their assemblies and conferences. 4. A public school-house. 5. A library. 6. A gallery to walk in, adorned with the pictures or statues of all the inventors of any thing useful to human life; as printing, guns, America, &c. and of late in anatomy, the circulation of the blood, the milky veins, and such like discoveries in any art, with short elogies under the portraitures: as likewise the figures of all sorts of creatures, and the stuffed skins of as many strange animals as can be gotten. 7. An anatomy-chamber, adorned with skeletons and anatomical pictures,

tures, and prepared with all conveniences for dissection. 8. A chamber for all manner of of drugs, and apothecaries materials. 9. A mathematical chamber, furnished with all sorts of mathematical instruments, being an appendix to the library. 10. Lodgings for the chaplain, surgeon, library-keeper, and purveyor, near the chapel, anatomy-chamber, library and hall.

That the third court be on one side of these, very large, but meanly built, being designed only for use, and not for beauty too as the others. That it contain the kitchen, butteries, brew-house, bake-house, dairy, lardry, stables, &c. and especially great laboratories for chemical operations, and lodgings for the under-servants.

That behind the second court be placed the garden, containing all sorts of plants that our soil will bear; and at the end a little house of pleasure, a lodge for the gardener, and a grove of trees cut out into walks.

That the second inclosed ground be a garden, destined only to the trial of all manner

EXPERIMENTAL PHILOSOPHY. 223

manner of experiments concerning plants, as their melioration, acceleration, retardation, conservation, composition, transmutation, coloration, or whatsoever else can be produced by art either for use or curiosity, with a lodge in it for the gardener.

That the third ground be employed in convenient receptacles for all sorts of creatures which the professors shall judge necessary, for their more exact search into the nature of animals, and the improvement of their uses to us.

That there be likewise built, in some place of the college where it may serve most for ornament of the whole, a very high tower for observation of celestial bodies, adorned with all sorts of dials and such like curiosities; and that there be very deep vaults made under ground, for experiments most proper to such places, which will be undoubtedly very many.

Much might be added; but truly I am afraid this is too much already for the charity or generosity of this age to extend

to;

to; and we do not design this after the model of Solomon's house in my Lord Bacon (which is a project for experiments that can never be experimented), but propose it within such bounds of expence as have often been exceeded by the buildings of private citizens.

OF THE PROFESSORS, SCHOLARS, CHAPLAIN,
AND OTHER OFFICERS.

THAT of the twenty professors four be always travelling beyond seas, and sixteen always resident, unless by permission upon extraordinary occasions; and every one so absent, leaving a deputy behind him to supply his duties.

That the four professors itinerant be assigned to the four parts of the world, Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, there to reside three years at least; and to give a constant account of all things that belong to the learning, and especially natural experimental philosophy, of those parts.

That

That the expence of all dispatches, and all books, simples, animals, stones, metals, minerals, &c. and all curiosities whatsoever, natural or artificial, sent by them to the college, shall be defrayed out of the treasury, and an additional allowance (above the 120*l*.) made to them as soon as the college's revenue shall be improved.

That, at their going abroad, they shall take a solemn oath never to write any thing to the college, but what, after very diligent examination, they shall fully believe to be true, and to confess and recant it as soon as they find themselves in an error.

That the sixteen professors resident shall be bound to study and teach all sorts of natural, experimental philosophy, to consist of the mathematics, mechanics, medicine, anatomy, chemistry, the history of animals, plants, minerals, elements, &c.; agriculture, architecture, art military, navigation, gardening; the mysteries of all trades, and improvement of them; the facture of all merchandizes, all natural ma-

gic or divination; and briefly all things contained in the catalogue of natural histories annexed to my Lord Bacon's Organon.

That once a day from Easter till Michaelmas, and twice a week from Michaelmas to Easter, at the hours in the afternoon most convenient for auditors from London, according to the time of the year, there shall be a lecture read in the hall, upon such parts of natural experimental philosophy, as the professors shall agree on among themselves, and as each of them shall be able to perform usefully and honourably.

That two of the professors, by daily, weekly, or monthly turns, shall teach the public schools, according to the rules hereafter prescribed.

That all the professors shall be equal in all respects (except precedency, choice of lodging, and such like privileges, which shall belong to seniority in the college); and that all shall be masters and treasurers by annual turns, which two officers for the
time

time being shall take place of all the rest, and shall be *arbitri duarum mensarum*.

That the master shall command all the officers of the college, appoint assemblies or conferences upon occasion, and preside in them with a double voice; and in his absence the treasurer, whose business is to receive and disburse all monies by the master's order in writing (if it be an extraordinary), after consent of the other professors.

That all the professors shall sup together in the parlour within the hall every night, and shall dine there twice a week (to wit, Sundays and Thursdays) at two round tables, for the convenience of discourse, which shall be for the most part of such matters as may improve their studies and professions; and to keep them from falling into loose or unprofitable talk, shall be the duty of the two *arbitri mensarum*, who may likewise command any of the servant-scholars to read to them what he shall think fit, whilst they are at table: that it shall belong

likewise to the said *arbitri mensarum* only, to invite strangers; which they shall rarely do, unless they be men of learning or great parts, and shall not invite above two at a time to one table, nothing being more vain and unfruitful than numerous meetings of acquaintance.

That the professors resident shall allow the college twenty pounds a year for their diet, whether they continue there all the time or not.

That they shall have once a week an assembly, or conference, concerning the affairs of the college and the progress of their experimental philosophy.

That if any one find out any thing which he conceives to be of consequence, he shall communicate it to the assembly, to be examined, experimented, approved, or rejected.

That if any one be author of an invention that may bring in profit, the third part of it shall belong to the inventor, and the two other to the society; and besides, if the thing be very considerable, his statue or picture,
with

with an elogy under it, shall be placed in the gallery, and made a denison of that corporation of famous men.

That all the professors shall be always assigned to some particular inquisition (besides the ordinary course of their studies), of which they shall give an account to the assembly ; so that by this means there may be every day some operation or other made in all the arts, as chemistry, anatomy, mechanics, and the like, and that the college shall furnish for the charge of the operation.

That there shall be kept a register under lock and key, and not to be seen but by the professors, of all the experiments that succeed, signed by the persons who made the trial.

That the popular and received errors in experimental philosophy (with which, like weeds in a neglected garden, it is now almost all over-grown) shall be evinced by trial, and taken notice of in the public lectures, that they may no longer abuse

the credulous, and beget new ones by consequence or similitude.

That every third year (after the full settlement of the foundation) the college shall give an account in print, in proper and antient Latin, of the fruits of their triennial industry.

That every professor resident shall have his scholar to wait upon him in his chamber and at table, whom he shall be obliged to breed up in natural philosophy, and render an account of his progress to the assembly, from whose election he received him, and therefore is responsible to it, both for the care of his education and the just and civil usage of him.

That the scholar shall understand Latin very well, and be moderately initiated in the Greek, before he be capable of being chosen into the service; and that he shall not remain in it above seven years.

That his lodging shall be with the professor whom he serves.

That

That no professor shall be a married man, or a divine, or lawyer in practice, only physic he may be allowed to prescribe, because the study of that art is a great part of the duty of his place, and the duty of that is so great, that it will not suffer him to lose much time in mercenary practice.

That the professors shall, in the college, wear the habit of ordinary masters of art in the universities, or of doctors, if any of them be so.

That they shall all keep an inviolable and exemplary friendship with one another; and that the assembly shall lay a considerable pecuniary mulct upon any one who shall be proved to have entered so far into a quarrel as to give uncivil language to his brother-professor; and that the perseverance in any enmity shall be punished by the governors with expulsion.

That the chaplain shall eat at the master's table (paying his twenty pounds a year as the others do); and that he shall read prayers once a day at least, a little before supper-

time; that he shall preach in the chapel every Sunday morning, and catechize in the afternoon the scholars and the school-boys; that he shall every month administer the holy sacrament; that he shall not trouble himself and his auditors with the controversies of divinity, but only teach God in his just commandments, and in his wonderful works.

THE SCHOOL.

THAT the school may be built so as to contain about two hundred boys.

That it be divided into four classes, not as others are ordinarily into six or seven; because we suppose that the children sent hither to be initiated in things as well as words, ought to have past the two or three first, and to have attained the age of about thirteen years, being already well advanced in the Latin grammar, and some authors.

That none, though never so rich, shall pay any thing for their teaching; and that, if any professor shall be convicted to have
taken

taken any money in consideration of his pains in the school, he shall be expelled with ignominy by the governors; but if any persons of great estate and quality, finding their sons much better proficient in learning here, than boys of the same age commonly are at other schools, shall not think fit to receive an obligation of so near concernment without returning some marks of acknowledgment, they may, if they please, (for nothing is to be demanded) bestow some little rarity or curiosity upon the society, in recompence of their trouble.

And because it is deplorable to consider the loss which children make of their time at most schools, employing, or rather casting away, six or seven years in the learning of words only, and that too very imperfectly:

That a method be here established, for the infusing knowledge and language at the same time into them; and that this may be their apprenticeship in natural philosophy. This, we conceive, may be done,
by

by breeding them up in authors, or pieces of authors, who treat of some parts of nature, and who may be understood with as much ease and pleasure, as those which are commonly taught; such are in Latin, Varro, Cato, Columella, Pliny, part of Celsus and of Seneca, Cicero de Divinatione, de Naturâ Deorum, and several scattered pieces, Virgil's Georgics, Grotius, Nenesianus, Manilius: And because the truth is, we want good poets (I mean we have but few), who have purposely treated of solid and learned, that is, natural matters (the most part indulging to the weakness of the world, and feeding it either with the follies of love, or with the fables of gods and heroes), we conceive that one book ought to be compiled of all the scattered little parcels among the antient poets that might serve for the advancement of natural science, and which would make no small or unuseful or unpleasant volume. To this we would have added the morals and rhetorics of Cicero, and the institutions of

Quincti-

Quintilian; and for the comedians, from whom almost all that necessary part of common discourse, and all the most intimate proprieties of the language are drawn, we conceive, the boys may be made masters of them, as a part of their recreation, and not of their task, if once a month, or at least once in two, they act one of Terence's Comedies, and afterwards (the most advanced) some of Plautus's; and this is for many reasons one of the best exercises they can be enjoined, and most innocent pleasures they can be allowed. As for the Greek authors, they may study Nicander, Oppianus (whom Scaliger does not doubt to prefer above Homer himself, and place next to his adored Virgil), Aristotle's history of animals, and other parts, Theophrastus and Dioscorides of plants, and a collection made out of several both poets and other Grecian writers. For the morals and rhetoric, Aristotle may suffice, or Hermogenes and Longinus be added for the latter; with the history of animals they should
be

be shewed anatomy as a divertisement, and made to know the figures and natures of those creatures which are not common among us, disabusing them at the same time of those errors which are universally admitted concerning many. The same method should be used to make them acquainted with all plants; and to this must be added a little of the ancient and modern geography, the understanding of the globes, and the principles of geometry and astronomy. They should likewise use to declaim in Latin and English, as the Romans did in Greek and Latin; and in all this travel be rather led on by familiarity, encouragement, and emulation, than driven by severity, punishment, and terror. Upon festivals and play-times, they should exercise themselves in the fields, by riding, leaping, fencing, mustering and training after the manner of soldiers, &c. And to prevent all dangers and all disorder, there should always be two of the scholars with them, to be as witnesses and directors of their actions; in foul weather, it would

not

not be amiss for them to learn to dance, that is, to learn just so much (for all beyond is superfluous, if not worse) as may give them a graceful comportment of their bodies.

Upon Sundays, and all days of devotion, they are to be a part of the chaplain's province.

That, for all these ends, the college so order it, as that there may be some convenient and pleasant houses thereabouts, kept by religious, discreet, and careful persons, for the lodging and boarding of young scholars; that they have a constant eye over them, to see that they be bred up there piously, cleanly, and plentifully, according to the proportion of the parents expences.

And that the college, when it shall please God, either by their own industry and success, or by the benevolence of patrons, to enrich them so far, as that it may come to their turn and duty to be charitable to others, shall, at their own charges, erect and maintain some house or houses for the entertainment of such poor mens sons whose
good

good natural parts may promise either use or ornament to the commonwealth, during the time of their abode at school; and shall take care that it shall be done with the same conveniences as are enjoyed even by rich mens children (though they maintain the fewer for that cause), there being nothing of eminent and illustrious to be expected from a low, sordid, and hospital-like education.

CONCLUSION.

IF I be not much abused by a natural fondness to my own conceptions (that *σοφυν* of the Greeks, which no other language has a proper word for), there was never any project thought upon, which deserves to meet with so few adversaries as this; for who can without impudent folly oppose the establishment of twenty well-selected persons in such a condition of life, that their whole business and sole profession may be to study the improvement
and

and advantage of all other professions, from that of the highest general even to the lowest artisan? Who shall be obliged to employ their whole time, wit, learning, and industry, to these four, the most useful that can be imagined, and to no other ends; first, to weigh, examine, and prove all things of nature delivered to us by former ages; to detect, explode, and strike a censure through all false monies with which the world has been paid and cheated so long; and (as I may say) to set the mark of the college upon all true coins, that they may pass hereafter without any farther trial. Secondly, to recover the lost inventions, and, as it were, drowned lands of the ancients. Thirdly, to improve all arts which we now have; and lastly, to discover others which we yet have not. And who shall besides all this (as a benefit by the bye), give the best education in the world (purely *gratis*) to as many mens children as shall think fit to make use of the obligation. Neither does it at all check or interfere with
any

any parties in state or religion, but is indifferently to be embraced by all differences in opinion, and can hardly be conceived capable (as many good institutions have done) even of degeneration into any thing harmful. So that, all things considered, I will suppose this proposition shall encounter with no enemies : the only question is, whether it will find friends enough to carry it on from discourse and design to reality and effect ; the necessary expences of the beginning (for it will maintain itself well enough afterwards) being so great (though I have set them as low as is possible in order to so vast a work), that it may seem hopeless to raise such a sum out of those few dead relicks of human charity and public generosity which are yet remaining in the world.



THE END OF VOL. I.

